

**AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP IN NATO: AN ACTION  
RESEARCH STUDY**

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**By**

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Author's Declaration.....	9
Abstract.....	10
<b>Chapter 1 – THESIS CONTRIBUTION, PURPOSE, RATIONALE and STRUCTURE.....</b>	<b>11</b>
1.1 Contribution .....	11
1.2 Purpose.....	11
1.3 Military Related Rationale .....	12
1.4 Leadership and Culture Related Rationale.....	14
1.5 The structure of the thesis .....	15
Overview.....	15
Chapter 2 - Context.....	15
Chapter 3 – Literature Review .....	16
Chapter 4 – Methodology and Methods.....	16
Chapter 5 – The Story and Outcomes .....	16
Chapter 6 - Personal Reflection .....	17
Chapter 7 – Organisational Reflections, Legacy and Summary .....	17
<b>Chapter 2 - ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT.....</b>	<b>18</b>
2.1 Contextualising NATO; its Origins and Membership .....	18
2.2 Governance and Structure .....	19
2.3 The NATO Joint Warfare Centre's Role.....	21
2.4 The NATO Joint Warfare Centre Operating Mode.....	22
2.5 The NATO Joint Warfare Centre Operating Challenges .....	22
2.6 The NATO Joint Warfare Centre Strategic Environment.....	23
2.7 The NATO Joint Warfare Centre Organisational Structure.....	25
2.8 Introducing the Problem and Opportunity .....	27
2.9 The Contextual Summary.....	33

<b>Chapter 3 - LITERATURE REVIEW</b> .....	36
3.1 Informing the first AR cycle – culture and leadership. ....	37
3.1.1 Command and Control (C <sup>2</sup> ) Influence. ....	38
3.1.2 C <sup>2</sup> 's pervasiveness and power.....	40
3.1.3 Criticisms of C <sup>2</sup> .....	41
3.1.4 Alternatives to C <sup>2</sup> .....	42
3.1.5 National and Service Influences .....	43
3.1.6 Why Research Organisational Culture?.....	47
3.1.7 Organisational Culture .....	48
3.1.8 Organisational Climate and Culture.....	50
3.1.9 Studying Leadership and Organisational Culture Health Warnings.....	52
3.1.10 Literature informed JWC Contextual Model .....	52
3.1.11 JWC Environment.....	53
3.1.12 Leadership Defined? .....	53
3.1.13 Leadership influences followers .....	54
3.1.14 Leadership influences organisations adapting to their environments .....	55
3.1.15 Transactional Leadership .....	56
3.1.16 Transformational Leadership .....	57
3.1.17 Phase 1 Literature Summary .....	59
3.2 Informing the second AR cycle – “mind the gap” .....	62
3.2.1 The “say/do” Gap: Espoused and In-Use Theories.....	63
3.2.2 What is Authentic Leadership? .....	64
3.2.3 Authentic Leadership Development .....	65
3.2.4 Phase 2 Literature Summary .....	73
<b>Chapter 4 - METHODOLOGY and METHOD of INQUIRY</b> .....	77
4.1 Methodology .....	77
4.1.1 Qualitative Research .....	78

4.1.2	Constructivism .....	78
4.1.3	Interpretivism .....	79
4.1.4	Axiology .....	79
4.1.5	Research alignment .....	80
4.1.6	Ethnography .....	81
4.1.7	Ethnography and its relation with Action Research .....	82
4.1.8	Action Research .....	82
4.1.9	Voices against Action Research .....	85
4.2	Ethical Considerations .....	85
4.3	Method of Inquiry .....	88
4.3.1	Interviews .....	88
4.3.2	Questions to start the Conversation .....	89
4.3.3	Data Analysis .....	92
4.3.4	Thematic Analysis .....	92
4.4	Summary .....	94
4.4.1	Individual and Organisational Learning .....	94
4.4.2	Methodology and Methods mapped across the wider DBA timeline .....	95
<b>Chapter 5 – The STORY.</b> .....		98
5.1	Story Part 1 .....	98
5.1.1	Influences on JWC organisational culture and leadership .....	99
5.1.2	JWC Operating Environment .....	102
5.1.3	JWC Mission .....	102
5.1.4	JWC Organisational Structure .....	102
5.1.5	JWC Organisational Climate .....	103
5.1.6	JWC Organisational Culture .....	103
5.1.7	Interview Construct .....	104
5.1.8	Interview Considerations .....	106

5.1.9	Interview Process .....	107
5.1.10	Interview Analysis .....	107
5.1.11	Interview Evolution .....	111
5.1.12	Aggregating the Feedback .....	113
5.1.13	Evolving the Methodology .....	120
5.1.14	Main Findings from Phase 1 .....	120
5.1.15	Summary .....	124
5.2	Story Part 2.....	127
5.2.1	Preparing the Intervention.....	127
5.2.2	Intervention Format .....	128
5.2.3	Authentic Leadership Development Process .....	129
5.2.4	Authentic Leadership Development Prompts .....	130
5.2.5	Authentic Leadership Programme Delivery .....	132
5.2.6	Authentic Leadership Development Impact and Outcomes .....	133
<b>Chapter 6 - PERSONAL REFLECTION.....</b>		<b>142</b>
6.1	First Person Related .....	143
6.1.1	Who am I as a Researcher? .....	143
6.1.2	My Research Period Life Context.....	144
6.1.3	When will it Stop? .....	145
6.1.4	Come to think of it, when did it start? .....	145
6.1.5	Approach to 1st Person Learning.....	146
6.1.6	How I now Lead.....	148
6.1.7	How I now Communicate .....	149
6.1.8	What I Worry about Still.....	150
6.1.9	Authentic Authenticity .....	151
6.1.10	First Person Summary .....	151
6.2	Second Person Related .....	153

6.2.1	Organisational Silence .....	156
6.2.2	Trapped .....	157
6.2.3	Reflections on Research Rigour.....	158
6.3	Third Person Related .....	160
6.3.1	Why is it so Hard for Military Organisations to be Transformational?.....	160
6.3.2	Transactional/Transformational Tendencies.....	161
6.3.3	How we will Know when an Organisation is Authentically Transformational? .....	162
6.3.4	Organisational Learning.....	163
<b>Chapter 7 – ORGANISATIONAL REFLECTIONS, LEGACY and SUMMARY .....</b>		<b>165</b>
7.1	Legacy.....	166
7.1.1	Why was it not even more Impactful? .....	166
7.1.1.1	Closed Minds .....	166
7.1.1.2	Structural Reinforcements of Behaviour .....	167
7.1.1.3	Vulnerability is considered a Weakness .....	167
7.1.1.4	We are just not ready for it .....	168
7.1.1.5	Authentic Leadership may not be the Answer .....	169
7.2	Summary .....	169

List of Figures	Page
FIGURE 1 - NATO GEOGRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION (2014) .....	19
FIGURE 2 – HIGH-LEVEL NATO MILITARY STRUCTURE (2014).....	20
FIGURE 3 - JWC SIMULATED TRAINING.....	21
FIGURE 4 – THE STANDARD NATO “J” STRUCTURE .....	26
FIGURE 5 – THE 2013 JWC ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE SURVEY RESULTS .....	30
FIGURE 6 - THE 2013/2014 JWC ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE SURVEY RESULTS.....	32
FIGURE 7 - EXTRACT FROM A 2004 EUROPEAN VALUES STUDY .....	44
FIGURE 8 - EXTRACT FROM A 2004 EUROPEAN VALUES STUDY .....	45
FIGURE 9 - ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE AND CLIMATE CONCEPTUAL MODEL (FARR ET AL., 1997) .....	50
FIGURE 10 - LEADERSHIP, STRUCTURES AND CULTURE IMPACT ON ORGANISATIONAL OUTPUT (SEMLER, 1997) .....	51
FIGURE 11 - JWC ALIGNMENT CONTEXTUAL MODEL .....	53
FIGURE 12 - POWER AND PROBLEM RELATIONSHIP .....	56
FIGURE 13 – PHASE 1 – LITERATURE REVIEW CONCEPTUAL MODEL.....	61
FIGURE 14 - DIALOGICAL PEDAGOGY IN DYADIC INTERACTION (BERKOVICH, 2014).....	68
FIGURE 15 - AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROCESS.....	69
FIGURE 16 – PHASE 2 – LITERATURE REVIEW CONCEPTUAL MODEL.....	74
FIGURE 17 - ACTION RESEARCH PROCESS MODEL FROM MCKAY AND MARSHALL (2001). ....	83
FIGURE 18 - FOCUS OF RESEARCHER AND SYSTEM CONTINUUM (COGHLAN AND BRANNICK, 2010: 103) .....	95
FIGURE 19 - RESEARCH, INTERVENTIONS AND IMPACT THROUGH TIME.....	97
FIGURE 20 - RESEARCH FOCUS THROUGH TIME .....	98
FIGURE 21 - OVERLAPPING CULTURAL INFLUENCES .....	101
FIGURE 22 - JWC ALIGNMENT: CONTEXTUAL MODEL .....	102
FIGURE 23 - JWC ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE SNAPSHOTS .....	104
FIGURE 24 - ACTION RESEARCH PROCESS MODEL ADAPTED FROM MCKAY AND MARSHALL (2001). .....	126
FIGURE 25 - JWC’S ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT JOURNEY .....	164

List of Tables	Page
TABLE 1 - JWC STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT .....	25
TABLE 2 – INITIAL ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE THEMES .....	28
TABLE 3 – TRANSACTIONAL/TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP CONTRASTED .....	58
TABLE 4 – RESEARCH ALIGNMENT .....	81
TABLE 5 – INTERMEDIATE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS .....	91
TABLE 6 – DEMOGRAPHIC SPREAD OF INTERVIEWEES .....	105
TABLE 7 – AGGREGATED DATA AND INTERPRETATION .....	119
TABLE 8 – HIGH-LEVEL VIEWS.....	123
TABLE 9 – THE 2014 JWC ORGANISATIONAL HEAT MAP .....	135
TABLE 10 – REFLEXIVE JOURNAL .....	147
TABLE 11 – ASPECTS AND EVIDENCE OF RIGOUR .....	159
TABLE 12 – TRANSACTIONAL/TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP CONTRASTED AND CONTEXTUALISED.....	162
TABLE 13 – OBSERVABLE CHARACTERISTICS OF AUTHENTIC TRANSFORMATIONAL BEHAVIOURS.....	163

## **Appendixes:**

### **Appendix A: Organisational Survey Questions**

### **Appendix B: Organisational Hotspots**

### **Appendix C: Consolidated and Aggregated Interview Results**

### **Appendix D: JWC Professional Values**

### **Appendix E: Participant Information Sheet**

### **Appendix F: Thematic Grid**

### **Appendix G: List of Abbreviations & Acronyms**



### **Author's Declaration**

I, Garry Hargreaves, declare that this study into authentic leadership in NATO is my own undertaking. The study was completed as a fundamental part of the degree of Doctor of Business Administration as tutored and mentored within the University of Liverpool under the guidance and supervision of Dr. Lisa Anderson. This research work was not funded or sponsored in any way and I had no pressures internally or externally to influence the study or findings. In the thesis I draw upon and cite the work of others when doing so. The data, analysis, views and opinions expressed in this thesis are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of NATO nor of Allied Command Transformation. The thesis represents a personal assessment and account of a snapshot of organisational life, taken many months ago, in circumstances that are constantly under adaptation.

## Abstract

This research into my organisation commenced with a desire to understand, from a participant's perspective, how certain organisational culture themes impacted leadership. It commenced as an ethnography with the focus upon telling a story through the lived experiences of managers and leaders in my organisation. As the research progressed, things were revealed that shed light upon a more pervasive organisational phenomenon that offered a broader insight into an organisational challenge, and at the same time, an opportunity for individual and organisational development. This opportunity encouraged me to reflect upon and then adapt my methodology resulting in a thesis performed as action research.

The study reveals a dissonance between the assessments of leadership experiences as reported by staff in the same organisation yet separated by only one managerial layer. It highlights the challenges and tensions felt as the leaders became aware of the dissonance and describes an organisational alignment initiative aimed at improving the coherence between the leadership and the organisational culture within a multinational military setting. The story reveals how leadership is often affected through previous experiences, experiences that were contextually unique, dated, fulfilling and effective at that time, yet potentially limiting and perhaps only partially effective in their current multinational leadership role. This reveals how insights and research were combined to create the catalyst for individual and organisational learning; it describes how personal development interventions were carefully crafted in order to specifically appeal to senior multinational leaders and managers. These leaders and managers were asked to confront and articulate their own values and beliefs about leadership and, in some cases, modify them in light of new learning; to become even more authentic leaders.

Cognizant through academic research that leadership and organisational cultures can have a profound effect on performance (Denison and Mishra, 1995; Harris and Ogbonna, 2000), aware through staff feedback and an organisational change that will be described in detail I was deeply curious to try and discover ***“did the way in which leadership is practised change in some way as a consequence of the organisational culture awareness activities”?***

## Chapter 1 – THESIS CONTRIBUTION, PURPOSE, RATIONALE and STRUCTURE

In this Chapter, I set out to provide an overview of the study aims, to justify the reasons behind the research and to outline the structure of the document.

### 1.1 Contribution

This study contributes to the literature on military leadership and organisational development through the examination of an organisational culture change initiative that took place within a multinational military setting. It provides a case study of an attempt to develop the leadership culture in a military training and education entity of NATO, from a traditional command and control influenced setting, into a softer more inclusive form of leadership. It illustrates the links between organisational culture and leadership and highlights the particular constraints and opportunities of bringing about organisational change in a multinational military setting.

From a practical perspective, the thesis contributes to actionable knowledge about how to plan and implement authentic leadership development in a multinational military environment and proposes a process. This thesis is written then with the aim of contributing to the academic debate in this field, supplementing existing research exists and offering a culturally contextual model for leadership and organisational development.

### 1.2 Purpose

The purpose of this action research is to investigate leadership as practised and experienced by senior members of staff in a multinational military organisation. The thesis builds upon a research field said to be only lightly touched in academic literature (Gerras et al., 2008); that of organisational cultures of military commands and centres. Indeed, there appear to be very few academic offerings discussing the relationship between multinational military leadership and the associated organisational culture (Redmond et al., 2015).

The outcomes of this action research investigation can be considered along three lines of development:

- to co-create the conditions for leadership development in my organisation,
- to bring about organisational development through the action research process,
- to contribute to actionable knowledge that may be beneficial for leaders and managers in similar organisations considering organisational change.

In fulfilling the purpose of the research, the thesis explores leadership/organisational culture synergies and interdependencies. It highlights how individual leaders, many with career-long exposure to national, single service influences, perform leadership and goes on to explore how personal histories and organisational contexts affect these leaders and consequently their followers and how that affects organisations. The research was initially premised on the proposition, informed by internally and externally developed and facilitated staff surveys, that there could be a misalignment or mismatching between the NATO Joint Warfare Centre's transformational mission and the way in which leadership is practiced by many of its members; nominally a practice driven from transactional approaches and strongly influenced by Command and Control (C<sup>2</sup>) mindsets (Oprean, 2012).

### 1.3 Military Related Rationale

According to Roxborough (2000: 367), military organisational dynamics have been more the subject of historical and political research rather than of sociological research. What research does exist, appears to locate military organisations as conservative and struggling to innovate (Ibid: 369). Cadle et al. (2014: 6065) claim that within "hierarchical bureaucracies" power and influence "derives from a person's position"; he goes on to add that organisations such as these can be highly effective in stable contexts, but are "slow to adapt" when that stability is challenged. Gerras et al. (2008: 14) make the point that many military challenges "stem from an outdated over-reliance on hierarchy" and "processes with limited one-way participation and communication". Meijer (2012: 17) in his research on the effects of a more comprehensive approach to military operations revealed profound challenges to traditional long-standing definitions of military C<sup>2</sup> and yet, despite these challenges military organisations resist evolution are considered to be very hard to change (March, 2008). 60 years ago, Marshall (1956: viii) made the point that "What has never before been tried within the profession of arms invariably invites more opposition than support." and this appears as true today, as it was then.

Militaries operate under formal remits regularly referred to "Command and Control" (Oprean, 2012) and are typically associated with "hard" power and asymmetric use of influence (Grint, 2008: 14), often exemplified by their reliance of the rank structure. Militaries, for the most part, are managed through the application of "hard command power" (Nye, 2004:5). Howieson and Kahn (2002: 13) raise the issue of "hard" and "soft" approaches when stating "military style of leadership, management and command training has often focussed on "hard" skills such as planning, organising and directing, all within an impersonal hierarchical structure". However,

current thinking is now shifting towards an awareness of, and an increase in the importance in “soft” skills (Andriopoulos et al., 2008; Kotter and Heskett, 1992; Raelin, 2003; Verhezen, 2010; UK MOD, 2014). Soft power “co-opts people rather than coerces them” and is “associated with intangible power resources” (Nye, 2004:5); it is the realm of the heart rather than the head. Soft power though is said to be highly vulnerable to “heavy handed unilateralism” (Ibid: 8) which is potentially a by-product of authoritarian organisations that favour command and control.

Despite the apparent resilience of C<sup>2</sup> some military academics studying recent military operations have raised the issue of the application of C<sup>2</sup> and question its continued relevance and validity for some missions. Meijer (2012: 17), in his paper on the “Consequences of the NATO Comprehensive Approach for Command and Control”, concluded that “the implementation of the comprehensive approach presents a variety of consequences to traditional command and control”. Curts and Campbell (2006: 15) also suggest that an alternative approach to C<sup>2</sup> is perhaps required, stating that “concepts of Command and Control are in need of serious re-evaluation if not overhaul”. As the Commander of a US warship hints at the limiting effect C<sup>2</sup> can have on an organisation if applied inappropriately when he remarks that “helping people realize their full potential can lead to attaining goals that would be impossible to reach under command-and-control.” (Abrashoff, 2002). NATO’s own research and technical organisation (RTO, 2005: 6) claims that a military leader’s skills must adapt to include “coaching, teaching, counselling, motivating, negotiating, conflict resolution and empowering” and go on to say that new leaders must be “able to understand other’s feelings and beliefs”, these are clearly skills that encroach upon a subtler, softer approach than that typically associated with C<sup>2</sup> paradigms.

According to Whitney et al., (2010: 5) “The practice of leadership is on the brink of a paradigm shift as it moves from authoritarian to collaborating, from talking at people to engaging in dialogue with them”. That philosophy appears not to be lost on those educating future leaders who are just starting out on their military leadership development where lessons on how to give orders to servicemen and women are being replaced with lessons on how to enable servicemen and women to think and speak their thoughts freely (UK MOD, 2014). This is also recognised by some scholars of militaries (Howieson and Kahn, 2002) that future officers will have to begin to accept that subordinates will “question old practices and propose new solutions” (Ibid: 14) and in their view a new cadre of future leaders will create an environment that prioritizes “trust, respect and empowerment”, an altogether softer approach; trust and respect can be

neither commanded nor controlled. McChrystal et al (2015: ix) claim that a whole new approach is required to change traditions concepts of what it is to be a leader stating that “the leader becomes creating the broader environment instead of command-and-control micromanaging.”

Howieson and Kahn (2002: 16) also claimed that servicemen of tomorrow will be focused on “alignment, creativity and empowerment”. They indicate that in a post-bureaucratic era, leaders who are able to encourage healthy dissent, leaders who appreciate followers and who are courageous enough to voice counter views will take the laurel. “Successful leaders” they claim “will have – not the loudest voice – but the readiest ear.” (Ibid.). A position repeatedly mentioned by leaders at the very top of military organisations but there is little evidence of that making its way through the resilient and multiple management layers beneath. Denning (2007:49) makes the challenge for C<sup>2</sup> based entities clear stating that people “habituated to the practice of hierarchical command-and-control management” are due a fundamental shift in the way they operate, claiming they will require a profound understanding of self and “exhibiting more than a little humility, and being able to level with others and speak from a genuine point of view.” (Ibid.)

#### 1.4 Leadership and Culture Related Rationale

Leadership and organisational culture as academic research domains have a certain academic theoretical history with a number of prolific researchers becoming increasingly published through journals and also in more easily digestible forms through books that have become well known and well used in practice. These sources will be cited throughout the thesis. Leadership and organisational culture have long been related; some academics being convinced that leaders determine an organisation’s culture (Argyris, 2010) and others claiming that, although leadership is certainly important, organisational cultures are also responsive to the operating environment or rather dependent upon the mindsets of the members of the organisation (Schein, 1990). Jackson and Parry (2010:71) claim “the linkage between leadership and culture to be one of the most intellectually satisfying areas to explore.”

Academic literature (Antonacopoulou and Bento, 2004; Heifitz, 1998; Rost, 1993; Zaleznik, 1992) and business literature (Abrashoff, 2002; Blanchard, 2010; Fox, 2011; Marquardt, 2005; Novak, 2012; Sharma, 2010) are dominated by the popular shift to embrace ‘softer’ approaches to leadership and management and the leaders of my centre decided to try and adopt more of these in an attempt to move the staff from organisational compliance to organisation

commitment (Covey, 2004). In exploring further “hard” and “soft” leadership I review the concept of organisational culture which is often described as being difficult to quantify being “a soft, holistic concept with, however, presumed hard consequences.” (Hofstede et al, 2010: 47); and in a multinational military training organisation these hard consequences show up in how effective we are in delivering an output that involves preparing people to deal with the uncertainties of military operations and their inevitable deployment into harm’s way. This research is then premised on research claiming that there is a synergistic relationship between culture and leadership and that when this relationship is right, it has the potential to deliver performance improvements (Denison, 1984; Semler, 1997).

## 1.5 The Structure Of The Thesis

### Overview

The thesis is offered from my position as a “researching professional” (Anderson et al., 2015) and is presented following the dissertation format guidance contained within Coghlan and Holian’s Chapter 9 “The dissertation: contribution to practical knowing” (Anderson et al., 2015). It represents my account as an insider researcher and reflective practitioner (Semler, 1997). A “reflective practitioner” (Semler, 1997: 26) is claimed to be “the greatest source of knowledge about organisational performance improvement” and Bath (2009: 215) offers that “the practitioner-as-researcher occupies a central position as an interpreter-of-practice”.

### Chapter 2 - Context

In Chapter 2, I describe the research context as it pertains to my organisation, describing briefly NATO as an overarching organisation before delving more deeply into the JWC’s mission, leadership and culture. I describe how an initiative to consider leadership and organisational culture in the JWC led to an awakening in the leaders and fuelled an organisational development programme that contributed to significant organisational change. I explain how the evolving global environment drives changes in NATO’s operational readiness and the need for preparedness and training; the role of the military centre at the core of the research. I consider two significant contextual influences upon the leadership and culture experienced within the NATO Joint Warfare Centre; those being associated with national influences and service influences and go on to introduce the organisational development project the JWC embarked upon that considered both organisational structure and organisational culture changes.

### Chapter 3 – Literature Review

The majority of the supporting literature appears in Chapter 3 although literature was accessed, reflected and acted upon throughout the research period through two focused periods sporadically reinforced as new observations and insights occurred. Occasionally, and where it makes sense to do so, I relate to new literature as part of the story in Chapter 5. Chapter 3 exposes the literature in a way that reflects the two major action research cycles. Firstly, by researching leadership and organisational culture within a command and control setting; a setting that I posit favours transactional leadership approaches. Secondly, and informed from insights emerging through the research, I describe the literature informing my second major iteration through a focussed action research cycle. I review the research related to authentic leadership and authentic leadership development leading to the creation and application of an intervention in my organisation and that was subsequently used outside of my practice in other military organisations.

### Chapter 4 – Methodology and Methods

In Chapter 4, I introduce and position the research in terms of the methodology followed and describe why certain research methods were privileged over others. I briefly qualify my start point as an ethnography associated with my approach during what I would later recognise to be my first significant action research cycle. I then go on to describe how the research became more focused as I become more associated, personally integrated, with the research and the researched. In this Chapter, I also consider the ethics of this type of research revealing risks to both the researcher and the researched before describing the methods used during interviews and subsequent analysis. I also describe action research as a methodology closely related to the “dual imperatives” (McKay and Marshall, 2001) of understanding organisations and bringing about change in organisations (Coghlan and Brannick, 2010) and, along with my own personal development, helping my organisation achieve the change it desired was important to me.

### Chapter 5 – The Story and Outcomes

The story of the research is expressed in Chapter 5 and can be summarised as being the convergence of two distinct but overlapping and dependant research phases. The first part of the story builds upon the context and describes how the literature and context combined to provide the research platform for my ethnography to take place. It describes the interviews, analysis and fuzziness from which new insights occurred. The story describes how the focus of the research evolved and explains why I decided to engage with an additional literature review whilst in the middle of my research. It tells how this additional literature review delayed



significantly my planned research timeline but informed my understanding, thinking and actions. It describes how an organisational discovery encouraged me to adapt my approach to the thesis and also informs the reader how a contextually relevant authentic leadership development intervention was created and implemented in JWC. In this Chapter I also consider my contribution and also reveal that leadership and organisational culture have taken a much more prominent role within NATO commands and provide evidence to support this claim. I describe where the authentic leadership development model has already been used as a developmental exercise on NATO leadership development courses.

### Chapter 6 - Personal Reflection

I reflect and disclose personally my own journey in Chapter 6 and also consider “second and third person learning” (Coghlan and Holian, 2015) before highlighting a number of research concerns I pondered upon and that continue to remain sources of curiosity for me. I reveal and disclose my personal research journey; a journey that saw me leave the organisation that revealed itself in a different light through the lens of the research. I describe the personal risks, losses and benefits the research brought and indicate how my decision to move away from organisational culture themes to look at creating an action learning intervention occurred. Finally, I explain what I think was my research legacy and how that created a leaderful moment for some of the members of staff remaining.

### Chapter 7 – Organisational Reflections, Legacy and Summary

In Chapter 7 I reflect upon the legacy of my research and summarise the journey. I reflect upon whether my research and actions left my organisation in a better place and also look to consider why the research was ineffective when that was the case. I also disclose how, although the research at the outset was very much focussed on a military context, the findings could also translate to other fairly formal organisations of which there appear to be many examples. Cameron and Quinn (2011: 812) claim that “Large organisations and government agencies are generally dominated by a hierarchy culture, as evidenced by large numbers of standardised procedures, multiple hierarchical levels” and so I also consider any applications for broader engagement or use.

## Chapter 2 - ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT

Within this Chapter, I lay out both the macro and micro contexts that define my organisation. This description ranges from the wider geopolitical influences impacting NATO, through to the unique organisational dynamics associated with NATO's only operational headquarters-level multinational training centre. I consider two significant contextual influences upon the leadership and culture experienced within the NATO Joint Warfare Centre, namely national influences and service influences, and I introduce the organisational development initiative the JWC embarked upon that considered both organisational structure and organisational culture changes.

### 2.1 Contextualising NATO; its Origins and Membership

The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) is a political body with a military arm. It was founded on the 4th April 1949 upon the signature from the leaders of the 12 forming nations of the Washington Treaty. This treaty and the organisation it spawned represented an international attempt to deter a perceived policy of Soviet expansion, discourage nationalism and encourage greater European political integration, perhaps a theme that has only recently returned to the forefront of international political thinking. NATO is an international political organisation that has its Headquarters in Brussels and, uniquely in the context of European international security organisations, it has a standing military capacity that can be called upon when other forms of international diplomacy have failed. NATO has several fully integrated member nations and a number of partners at various stages of membership maturity.



Figure 1 - NATO Geographical Representation (2014)

## 2.2 Governance and Structure

NATO is governed by the North Atlantic Council (NAC), which is composed of national political leaders who authorise and direct the work of various NATO bodies, comprising 8,800 permanently assigned military and civilian staff and many thousands more operating under a NATO mandate. These leaders are represented by permanent members and their delegations who provide an interface to the NATO Secretary General, the Chairman of the NAC.

An important NATO body for my practice that resides under the NAC is the Military Committee which is made up of senior military leaders from the 28 (since completing the research this number has risen to 29) NATO member nations. This Committee oversees the NATO Military Command Structure that consists of two distinct areas of responsibility and foci; an operational entity concerned with the conduct of NATO operations and an entity that leads organisational transformation initiatives within NATO. The organisational layout from 2014 can be seen in Figure 2.



Figure 2 – High-Level NATO Military Structure (2014)

The operational arm of the NATO military structure is charged with the planning and execution of all Alliance operations. It is based in Europe and commanded from SHAPE (Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe) located in Mons, Belgium, under the operational title of Allied Command Operations (ACO). Residing beneath this strategic headquarters (HQ) are the subordinate force commands and other operational entities as depicted in Figure 2. ACO conducts NATO missions such as the ones in the Balkans, Afghanistan and the anti-piracy operation around the coast of East Africa. ACO has a number of subordinate HQs spanning across Europe from Norway to Turkey and from Portugal to Poland and it is these units that expedite NATO operations and provide the demand for operational level exercising and training which is one of Allied Command Transformation's (ACT) deliverables.

ACT, the transformational arm of the NATO military structure, is commanded from HQ SACT (Headquarters Strategic Allied Command Transformation) located in Norfolk, Virginia, USA. It is responsible for doctrine and concept development, military experimentation, capability development, innovation, education and training leading to a formal mission of “promoting and overseeing the continuing transformation of the Alliance’s forces and capabilities” (Pedlow, ND: 14). It was designed to transform NATO and the “jewel in the organisation’s crown” is said to be the NATO JWC (Maisonneuve, 2003). There is an inherent dichotomy in the close positioning of the ACO and ACT military entities; military operations encourage the use of institutionalised routines, standardised procedures and formalised processes, whereas

transformation is inherently non-standard, seeks to refine or challenge existing processes, to embrace radical ideas and new ways of working.

Despite a clear mission differentiation between ACO and ACT the NATO member nations that populate these HQs do not differentiate when matching military personnel to the various NATO entities. In staffing these organisations, they take little account of the rather different focus of the organisations into which their personnel will be embedded. ACO (the operational unit) is around 10 times the size of ACT (the unit charged with organisational transformation) and consequently, the NATO military structure relies heavily upon C<sup>2</sup> and encourages a transactional style of leadership, highly appropriate for ACO but antithetical to the objectives of ACT. I posit that the organisational culture and style of leadership that exists in an operationally focused organisation would be different to the organisational culture and style of leadership that exists in a transformational organisation. This will be explored in much more detail within the thesis.

### 2.3 The NATO Joint Warfare Centre's Role

The research was performed in the NATO Joint Warfare Centre (JWC) based in Stavanger in Norway. It is a centre whose primary role is the provision of collective operational headquarters level training and exercising ACO.



The JWC trains and educates NATO force headquarters by providing “wargaming” capabilities that enables sailors, air-force, army and civilian personnel to experience full spectrum joint operational level warfare (Kucukaksoy, 2012) within a synthetic simulated and importantly benign environment.

Figure 3 - JWC Simulated Training



In performing its role, the JWC enables joint military staffs to learn and grow together as a unit before they deploy as a NATO HQ into what might be a perilous area of operation. JWC's internationally agreed mandate is to prepare HQ's from ACO prior to their deployment on NATO missions and it has trained in excess of 50,000 servicemen and women during its relatively short 14-year lifespan. In any one year the JWC delivers four major NATO exercises a year with two in planning or after-action review phases. It trains staff in the art of modern crisis management, ranging from humanitarian relief operations (such as training HQ's to prepare for earthquake relief) through to mission rehearsals for standing operations (such as the anti-piracy operations off the coast of Africa) and beyond to exercises as strategic political messages that exemplify determinism and strive to defer aggression (such as the recent NATO exercises triggered by the events in Crimea and Ukraine). The JWC is the only NATO entity that is able to simulate major "joint" (Navy, Air Force and Army) multi-national operations and they are significant catalysts for the operational leaders trying to lead and make sense of events in a highly complex and rapidly changing world. In order to try and bring order to such a dynamic environment Militaries operate for the most part under a management philosophy loosely described as "Command and Control" (C<sup>2</sup>). NATO C<sup>2</sup> will be explored in more detail with this thesis.

#### 2.4 The NATO Joint Warfare Centre Operating Mode

JWC training and exercise portfolio is driven from a document agreed at the NAC entitled the Strategic Annual Guidance for Exercises and training (SAGE). The SAGE predicts major NATO training and exercises into a 5-year horizon taking into account the forecasted political strategic environment in terms of military preparedness and demonstrating solidarity. It is when these events are two years out that JWC involvement commences. Twenty four months prior to the exercise execution declared in the SAGE the JWC appoints an Officer of Primary Responsibility (OPR) who effectively owns that exercise through its two year lifecycle from assessing strategic level exercise aims, defining the fictitious context, developing incidents and events to trigger responses from the training audience, building the individual and team training plans all the way to the execution phase of the event, when thousands of troops might be deployed running through a simulated crisis response exercise.

#### 2.5 The NATO Joint Warfare Centre Operating Challenges

In order for the OPR to deliver the exercise and all its content, the OPR draws upon the skill and will of staff members and subject matters experts (SME's) for example in cyber defence, ballistic missile defence, intelligence or other specific military domains. Interestingly the JWC

had no formal job descriptions within their structure for an OPR and consequently, OPRs have no formal authority over the SMEs they require. Instead, teams are “cobbled together” into functional capability groupings that do not then lie within neatly constrained hierarchical chains of command but are more dependent upon the informal application of influence and power. They are ad hoc resourced capabilities put together by engaging individuals and teams that may actually reside in another branch or division. This type of dynamic resource allocation does not fit well with an environment defined by  $C^2$  and the organisation is subject to considerable internal friction as it builds capacity and knowledge outside of the bounds of a typical military headquarters. We are highly dependent upon strong personal relationships and informal leaders, on garnering commitment and support from specialists that are not necessarily obliged to give it. The organisational realities of generating teams outside of the formal organisational structure are challenging traditional understandings of command and control.

An additional challenge to organisational norms comes from the requirement to accommodate and integrate non-military actors (the Red Cross, the UN and many other scenario dependant civilian agencies) into the training and exercise events. These NGOs (non-governmental organisations) bring the “comprehensive approach” (Meijer, 2012) that NATO member Nations insist on and they are embedded into the exercise as exercise role players or as exercise training audience. It is critical (sometimes even vital) that we exercise as closely as possible to the way we expect to operate in a conflict zone (often referred to in military environments as “train as you fight”). That means being inclusive, collaborative and deeply respectful of actors outside of our formal  $C^2$  environments.

## 2.6 The NATO Joint Warfare Centre Strategic Environment

Responding to the environment in which NATO militaries may be expected to operate leads to inevitable adaptations to mission statements and the tasks given to the organisational units. These changes can lead to the formal organisational structure coming under pressure, becoming less relevant or effective. This was the case in 2012 when the then Commander of JWC, Major General JF Berger, aware of the evolving geopolitical context, stated that the JWC was not adequately prepared to meet the post-2014 challenges to NATO Training and Exercise. He instigated a whole-scale review of the internal structure which evolved into a five-phase analysis, design, transition, testing and reporting project lasting three years. I was pulled out of my formal position in the organisation to lead the team delivering the latter three phases. Coincidentally in 2012, instigated as a side effect of my DBA studies, I had been able to engage senior leaders in JWC to consider organisational culture as a theme worthy of intentional

investment. Both these significant change initiatives will be further explored later in the thesis but for the context, it is important to be aware that whilst JWC had undergone only minor organisational changes during the last decade or so, it had not radically changed the vision, mission, structure or climate and they had never before purposefully looked to match the organisation's culture to all of these, and we had never considered enabling research to inform and drive collective actions towards better framing and aligning the organisation's culture to the evolving mission. (Lobovitz and Rosansky, 1997; Semler, 1997).

A number of key political motivated drivers, articulated at NATO Summits, exert influence upon NATO generally and inform the JWC strategic environment as well as my research context within JWC specifically. These are highlighted in Table 1 below:

<b>Smart Defence and the Financial Crisis</b>	Nations are increasingly aware that they are not able to afford full spectrum defence capabilities. Deciding instead to “pool and share” capability. This means that operations will be increasingly dependent upon others and it is considered unlikely that any single NATO nation would have neither the ability, nor the will, to act alone in the future (Ul-Hassan, 2014; Vershbow, 2014).
<b>Connected Forces Initiative (CFI)</b>	An increasing demand to test and validate the interoperability of NATO and non-NATO militaries through training and exercises and to drive forward CFI (Lindley-French, 2012). Operations in Afghanistan proved that when partners and coalitions form, sharing information and managing in this multination joint operation is a challenge. CFI aims to connect and information share before an operation begins. Exercises and training are considered to be the vehicle to interconnect forces.
<b>NATO/National Defence Postures 2020+</b>	Many Western governments are realising that they cannot afford full spectrum defence capabilities, deciding instead to collaborate on how their 2% of GDP is spent filling NATO gaps. So, UK may provide aircraft carrier capabilities to NATO and Denmark could bring Air Defence capability (Albright et al., 2010; UK Government, 2010).



<b>Reduction in “live operations”</b>	An “operational pause” is predicted following a decade of coalition interventions in Afghanistan, the Balkans and Iraq (Vershbow, 2014). Nations are highly alerted to losing the cohesiveness and capabilities that operations naturally provide and this generates an increasing demand for the simulated exercises and training events. The facilitated preparedness being a more palatable and affordable than learning through real-world experience during live and inherently dangerous military operations.
<b>More visible defence posture</b>	In response to the crisis in Ukraine NATO’s recently formed “Readiness Action Plan” (NATO Fact Sheet, 2014) announced at the NATO Summit in Wales, adds another dimension to the NATO training and exercise overhead. The generation and commissioning of NATO’s “Very Rapid Joint Task Force” (VJFT) will depend upon the integration of these units into the already established NATO force structure. That integration is tested and validated through the training and exercise capabilities at the JWC.

**Table 1 - JWC Strategic Environment**

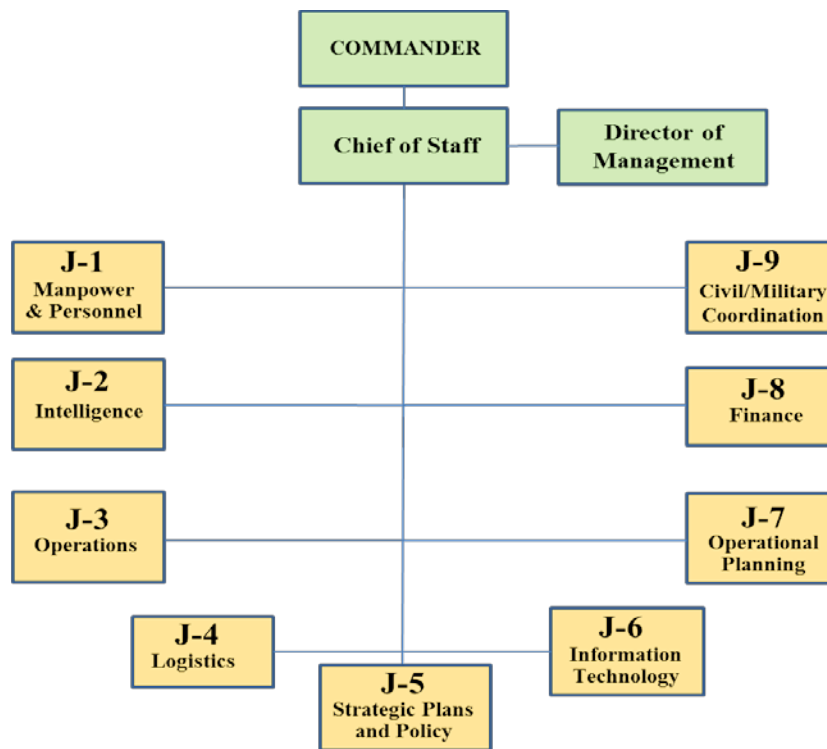
Considering all the factors above it was becoming clear to the JWC leaders that we had mission changes that would inevitably lead to organisational developments and drive a requirement to operate rather differently in light of our revised setting and “transformational” role.

## **2.7 The NATO Joint Warfare Centre Organisational Structure**

NATO applies, through the application of C<sup>2</sup>, standardization and consistency through policies and procedures in order to provide manageable coherence and interoperability when multinational coalitions are formed. The headquarters (HQs) that manage these coalitions are structured into functional groupings known as “divisions” that can be easily recognised by other militaries and are compatible across most western militaries. Consequently, most NATO nations adopt and abide by the NATO “J”<sup>1</sup> structure when composing HQ staffs as can be seen in Figure 4 below.

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<sup>1</sup> “J” refers to “Joint” when “Joint” depicts the presence of all services – Army, Air Force & Navy.



**Figure 4 – The Standard NATO “J” Structure**

This creates formal functional groupings around hierarchically managed capabilities; capabilities that are highly interoperable and effective when deployed on multinational operations or running an operational HQ. However, there is a downside to such an approach and even within the ranks these functional groupings are commonly referred to by the staff as “operational stovepipes” or “cylinders of excellence”. These groupings are rigidly bound functionally and protected passionately by their divisional heads who resist any attempts to reduce their internally focused capacity or mess with their “chain of command”. Consequently, and as often reported within the staff surveys I ran, these structures are far less effective when capabilities need to be drawn from across these formal boundaries in order to have the appropriate subject matter expertise (SME) come together in order to deliver training and exercises. Ironically exactly the way in which the JWC operates most of the time when delivering exercise and training output.

Another complicating factor is the manning of SME roles where, due to the vagaries of national posting and manning paradigms, general staff officers may be placed into a role described as an “SME” but in reality, they could have no real “expertise” and occasionally very little knowledge to rely upon. They typically learn on the way and they may be required to train

personnel who have considerably more expertise in a subject area than they have. That requires a degree of humility and vulnerability and these traits can be interpreted as weaknesses in a military context.

## 2.8 Introducing the Problem and Opportunity

I first became aware of the importance of organisational culture and leadership as I progressed through the University of Liverpool's DBA programme and already in 2011 and sometime before my decision to research leadership and culture, I was taking the opportunity with small groups to use my DBA learning as a catalyst for discussions on our organisational effectiveness. Using knowledge created especially through the Leadership, Crisis Management and Ethics modules of the DBA programme and well as countless hours reading business and leadership "best sellers" and HBR reviews, I developed, and then sought permission to run, small team surveys assessing a number of themes that had been identified through academic publications as being associated with high performing organisations. Denison et al., (2014: 158) offer that organisational surveys "support the practical objectives of organisational development and change by serving as a means of feedback and benchmarking".

I prepared an early version of a questionnaire that was used four times with different groups, from different parts of the organisation, working at various grades and with various functions. The grouping was random and all had volunteered to take part in the survey that was administered anonymously through a "Survey Monkey" link. The responses were numerically analysed through a "Likert" scaled response with results averaged across the range of the themes. A raw snapshot of our organisation, as seen through the eyes of randomly selected recipients, provided a trigger for a deeper conversation of relevance and engagement. These can be seen below along with the sources of the questions, many of them directly taken from mandated readings within the DBA program.

<b>Trait</b>	<b>Organisational Culture Developing Question</b>	<b>Literary Reference</b>
Organisational “oneness”	In the JWC we have a clear and shared understanding of what we do.	Brief et al., 1996
Relationships	In the JWC we have good interpersonal relationships.	Chan, 2002
Communications	In the JWC we have effective communications channels.	Andriopoulos et al., 2008
Trust	In the JWC we trust and are trusted.	Bijlsma-Frankema, 2001
Commitment	In the JWC we are committed to completing our tasks.	Blanchard, 2010
Recognition	In the JWC people are recognised for their efforts.	Senn & Hart, 2006
Support	In the JWC we have the support of our managers and peers.	Hu & Hang, 2007
Credibility	In the JWC we the managers and peers walk the talk.	Senn & Hart, 2006
Accountability	In the JWC people raise their hand to help, even if it is not their specific role.	Heskett, 2011
Respect	In the JWC people are respectful and tolerant.	Kline, 1999
Flexibility	In the JWC we are agile and adapt quickly to new challenges.	Hallinger, 2010
Learning	In the JWC we are always on the look out to make improvements.	Harris & Ogbonna, 2011

**Table 2 – Initial Organisational Culture Themes**

Over a period of several months I asked these groups of staff questions about what they expected to experience in an effective organisational culture for JWC and whether we were doing well compared to those themes. I also asked open questions to enable written descriptions of what else would they want to experience. The analysis of these surveys provided me with a great deal to ponder on, for example:

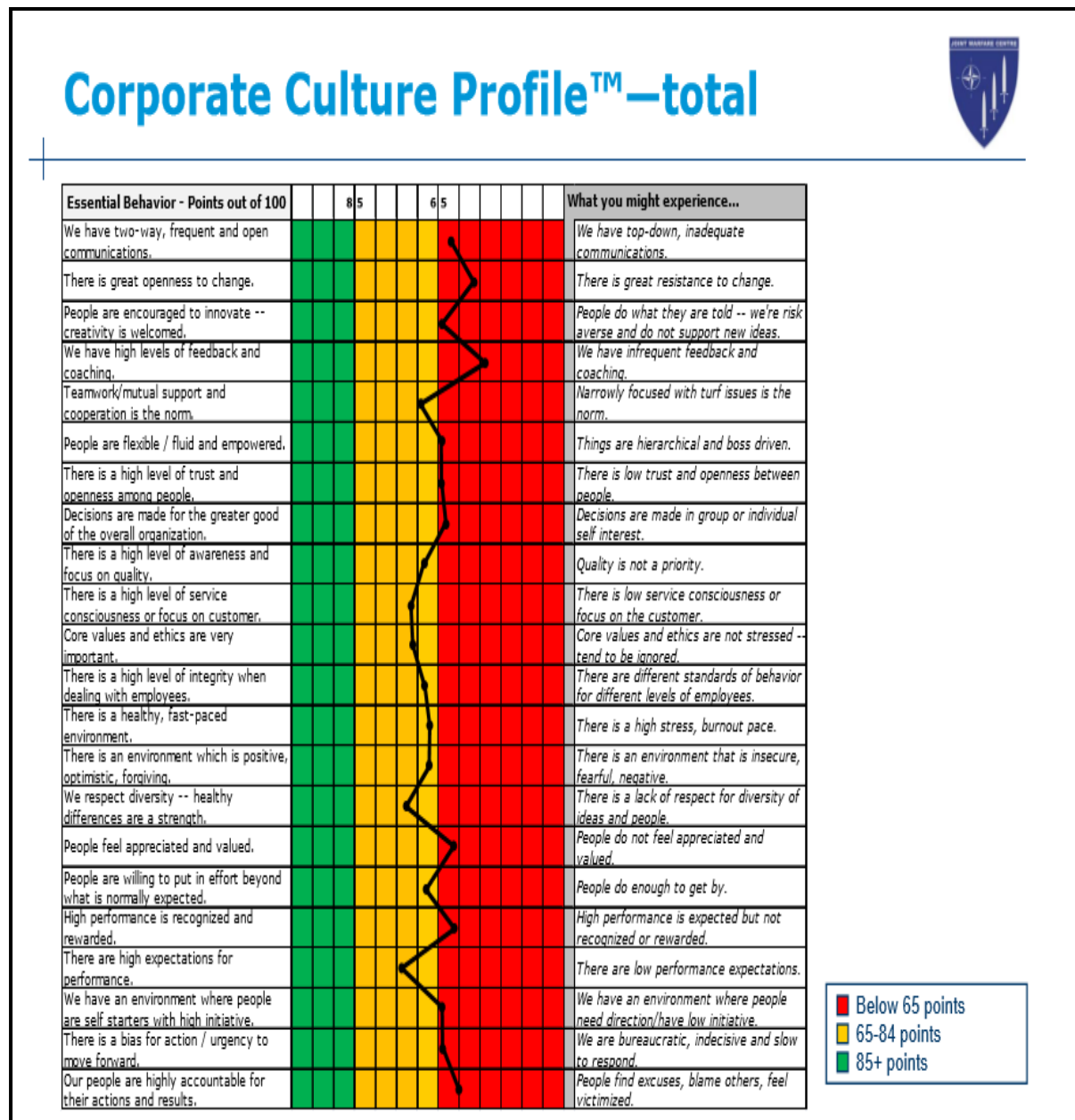
- despite these groups being randomly put together, there was consistency in the groups regarding how we were doing against certain themes
- other themes were consistently revealed in the discussions as being important

It seemed that despite the surveys being relatively simple in both design and analysis, something curious and consistent was at play. Despite major staff turnovers and evolving missions; the responses when analysed were assessed as low in some areas and high in others, consistently over and over again. We had, it seemed, stumbled across an organisational phenomenon that presented us with the possibility to develop and to do so with our

transformational mission in mind. I presented these findings to the Commander, and with his encouragement, the senior leaders (the JWC Command Group), collectively (but not unanimously) decided that this was something they wanted to know more about and, critically, do something about. What to do about it was not initially easy to determine; some leaders felt that we should not even have asked the questions, others expressed scepticism of the subject and the protagonist, others were worried about the additional workload dealing with this would bring. I felt that we had the ability internally to develop improvement plans that would aim to address our organisational culture development and said as much during a meeting to determine the way ahead. In the end though the Commander decided that something was going to be done and given the sensitivities involved he determined that we could not manage this change internally, as the results needed to be seen as being objective and not tainted by being managed by an individual or from a specific area within the organisation. There was also doubt within the Commander's mind that the results showing our lower scoring attributes were complete or accurate. The Commander reflected and also stated that he did not want to take the risk of senior leaders not taking this effort seriously and also pointed out that we were not able to "benchmark" or compare our organisational culture with other international organisations. For these reasons, he decided that we would contract an organisational culture consultancy company to make an assessment through an all staff survey and to analyse the organisational culture of the JWC and to compare that with other multinational entities that had embarked upon organisational culture change. To prepare the staff for an organisational survey the Commander asked me to write an article for the JWC Magazine in order to start to communicate the value of an effective organisational culture and this was first published in JWC and then reprinted upon request (Hargreaves, 2012). The article was a summary of relevant academic papers researched through the DBA "taught" modules, these papers provided the inspiration, catalyst and motivation for the article, and the leadership's decision to engage with an external consultant specialising in organisational culture to prepare and expedite a JWC wide survey.

The consultancy analysis was achieved through a whole staff survey that involved measurement, analysis and recommendations regarding the "fit" of our culture to our stated vision and strategy. The survey was anonymous and generated a response rate was over 65%.

The results of this survey can be seen below in Figure 5.



**Figure 5 – The 2013 JWC Organisational Culture Survey Results**

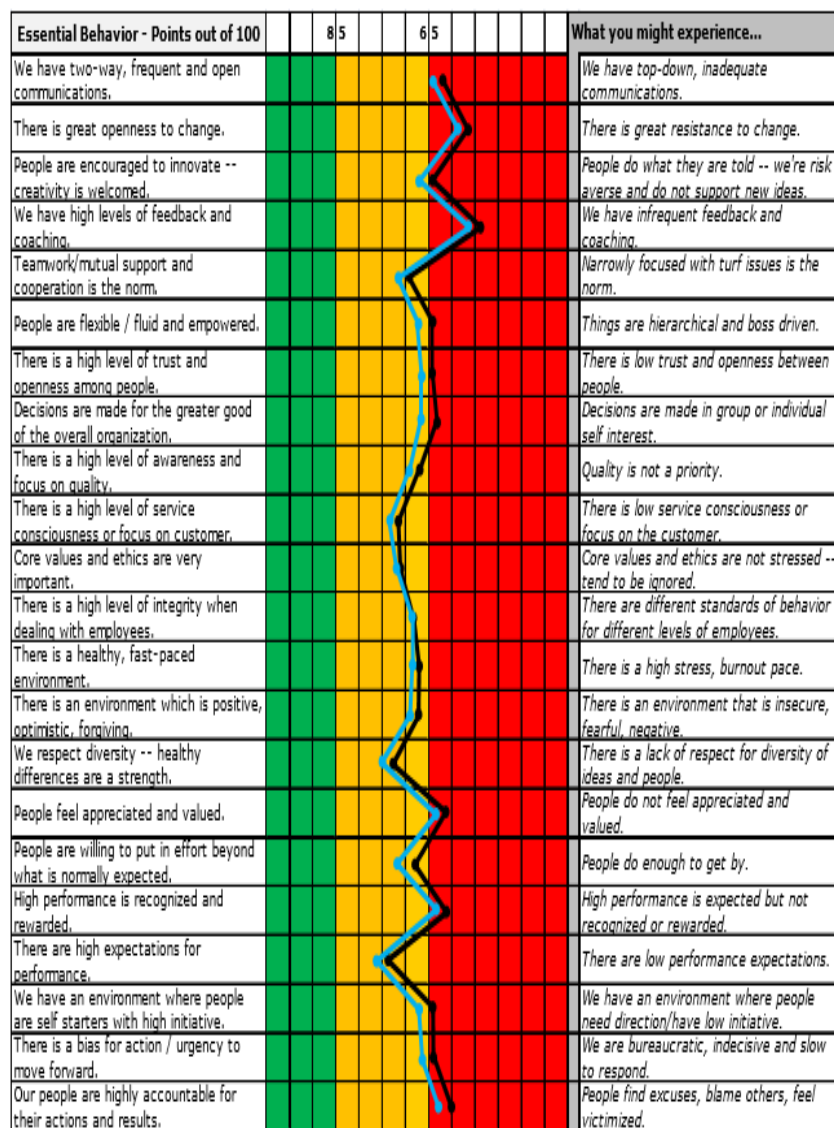
These results created a great deal of interest and eventually led to a two-day Organisational Culture Awareness Workshop for the leadership which in turn generated a short comprehensive programme aimed at raising the awareness of organisational culture generally. The organisational culture awareness programme baselined where we were across certain themes and through the delivery of the awareness workshops involving cross-sections of the whole organisation, the leaders determined to engage with some of the lower scoring themes that the

leaders felt were important in order to improve and be better able to support and expedite our mission.

It was also during one of the JWC leadership off sites (Kucukaksoy, 2013) that it became evident that the senior leaders considered the organisation and leadership of the JWC consistently differently to the way in which many of the members within the organisation experienced it. This realisation that there was a gap between how the leadership see the organisation and how the other vast majority of the organisation sees it presented a critical moment; we had arrived at a fundamental milestone moving us from incubation to precipitation (Turner, 1976), an organisational awakening where the leadership became aware that all was not as they had imagined, and we now had to decide whether these findings and subsequent reflection would provide sufficient momentum to move us to action. It was clear from a number of workshops and discussions forums that taking action was not a foregone conclusion, some of the leaders were simply denying the results, to others the “so what” was not compelling enough but fortunately there was enough desire in the Commander and Chief of Staff to move to action.

During this workshop leaders were also asked to commit and take responsibility for the organisation’s culture, they were advised by the Commander that leaders have a significant role to play in at least feedback, coaching, being valued and appreciated, for modelling change and demonstrating accountability; at least this is what was espoused at senior leadership meetings. The Commander asked the leaders to consider what values would our organisation have if was to become even more effective and even more aligned with the transformational mission. Through a long process, they came up with the JWC Values (Kucukaksoy, 2013); values the Commander reminded the leaders that it was their role to “live these values”. During this period the JWC created our own organisational values and a new motif that can be seen on the upper right of Figure 6 (see Appendix D), this will be discussed later in the thesis. In Figure 6 you can see the results of the second survey that was taken twelve months later as the organisational culture awareness programme was underway.

## The Corporate Culture Profile™ - Total



Blue - 2014  
Black - 2013

Below 65 points  
65-84 points  
85+ points

**Figure 6 - The 2013/2014 JWC Organisational Culture Survey Results**

I was asked to make my own analysis and make recommendations to the leaders on what to do next. The first thing I noticed, reinforcing my own results introduced earlier, was that in spite of a 40% turnover of staff during the period between the surveys the general profile was remarkably similar. There was a good degree of consistency supporting the view that organisations appear to have “personality” type characteristics (Martins and Terblanche, 2003)



and that they can be stable enough to be taken seriously as an organisational attribute in the same way as structures and missions are (Senn and Hart, 2006).

The consultancy survey confirmed the presence (or lack of) three of my own and introduced two other lower scoring themes - these can be seen clearly in Figures 5 and 6. Feedback from the staff survey then identified the following organisational themes as areas for improvement:

- Feedback and coaching
- Our ability to change
- High performance expected but not recognised
- A feeling of being unappreciated/not valued
- A lack of accountability

The Commander's initial reaction was to encourage me to try to do something about them all, across and through the organisation. Conversely, I was aware through my DBA reading, that selecting only one or two organisational themes to focus on would be more effective than trying to tackle everything at once (Schein, 2010). The organisational culture stream of this development involved several workshops (Kucukaksoy, 2013), all staff awareness sessions and another article for the JWC Magazine on "The Language of Leadership" (Hargreaves, 2014). It also created an organisational culture awareness programme that was provided to all staff through a number of facilitated workshops (Kucukaksoy, 2013). It was through this organisational culture awareness programme that I decided to observe leadership informed by my learning through the DBA and supplemented by my own research to try and identify and analyse organisational culture themes that were important for our joint multinational military organisation. I looked closely at the themes and inferred from them that most of the lower scoring were profoundly related to how we leadership is performed within our organisation.

## **2.9 The Contextual Summary**

The NATO JWC is part of a strategic command that has "transformation" not only in its title but as its focus. Transformation focused upon adapting to an ever-changing geo-political context whilst the operational commands try to deal with the here and now. It is more than 14 years since the Joint Warfare Centre (JWC) was formed; a time before the ISAF mission (International Stabilisation Afghanistan), before the NRF (NATO Response Force) was conceived and long before the recent events in eastern Europe transpired to drive us to be even

more inclusive and comprehensive in our approach to NATO missions <sup>2</sup> (Meijer, 2012). Comprehensive approaches are in military terms predicated upon the assumption that successful military interventions are increasingly dependent upon a “hearts and minds” approach delivered through “the right combination of hard and soft power” (Baumann, 2008). Findings from detailed analysis of why international stabilisation efforts struggle to deliver effective results were attributed to an inability to “integrate an understanding of cultural differences” (Ibid.: 72).

My practice is not situated in an operational command about to deploy into harm’s way, it is a unique entity that resides somewhere between a school, a diagnostic centre, a formal military training entity and an experimentation and concept development centre. It is an organisation that would struggle with the organisational rigidity that a “J” structure environment actually perpetuates (see Figure 4), we embarked upon an organisational redesign that will be a radical departure from a traditional military structure. At the same time, Nations are insisting on a “zero growth” policy meaning that despite the changing strategic environment our establishment manning is not going to change, the staff numbers we have now within the centre will not increase, in spite of the increasing workload driven by the external factors shown in Table 1. NATO policies and procedures will not allow us to adapt the rules and formal practices, what Farr et al. (1997) refer to as the “climate”, to streamline or bypass often bureaucratic routines. It encourages the JWC then to look carefully for any areas that might provide us with an organisational benefit and respond to the calls for increasing comprehensiveness. Two organisational surveys involving over 65% of the staff repeated in 2013 and 2014 showed areas for improvement and identified low scoring areas. This provided me with a research backdrop from which to commence my study of my organisation as we embarked upon better aligning our organisation.

Within the story in Chapter 5, I describe how I supported and at the same time researched my organisation and the leaders within it. I explain how the NATO JWC embarked upon a major shift in strategy (based upon a shifting mission for our centre), structure (in order to respond to the new operational and training environment we find ourselves in) and our organisational culture (as informed through organisational surveys I prepared as a consequence of my DBA

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<sup>2</sup> For example, the ISAF mission involved 42 Nations that made up the governmental organisations (GO’s) and non-governmental organisations (NGO’s) framework into which NATO had to operate. Some NGOs (e.g. Red Cross, Doctors without Borders etc) would not collaborate with people in military uniform, let alone be considered as part of a formal C<sup>2</sup> environment.

study). “Effective organisational change occurs when new climates and cultures are created and maintained” claims Schneider et al. (1996:18). I look specifically at the organisation and leaders to try and understand *“did the way in which leadership is practised change in some way as a consequence of the organisational culture awareness activities”*. and as the answer to this question became clear I developed authentic leadership development interventions that have been used within my practice and also utilised in other NATO settings as well.

### Chapter 3 - LITERATURE REVIEW

Within this Chapter, I lay out the literature in terms of two distinct but overlapping and interdependent phases of research, contemplation, action and reflection. The first phase looking into research associated with multinational military culture and leadership and the second, driven by the findings from the first research and action phase, leading into an analysis of the literature around authentic leadership and how it may be developed. I review, reflect and, where appropriate for my setting, critique the relevant literature in order to be able to learn and apply new contextual knowledge and perform contextual research specifically for my practice. The literature review is therefore written up based on these two clear phases even though there were many minor iterations when I needed to locate or rereview research literature throughout the thesis period. Consequently, and where applicable, some literature is also introduced and reviewed with the rest of the thesis where it made sense to do so.

My initial literature research through Phase 1 was focussed on gaining a better understanding of my organisation in terms of its organisational culture and its relationship to leadership in a multinational military setting. As mentioned briefly in the introduction and context chapters, my “transformational” organisational setting is undergoing significant organisational change and is yet heavily influenced, perhaps even characterised by  $C^2$ , which rather ironically encourages stability and resistance to deviations (Merton: 1940). McChrystal (2015: 36) as former 4\* General states that “Standardization and uniformity have enabled military leaders and planners to bring a semblance of predictability and order to the otherwise crazy environment that is war.”

I describe how  $C^2$  pertains to my practice in terms of how leadership is enacted and bring together the literature on organisational culture and leadership before focussing on authentic leadership development. I study how leadership is, or could be, more effective for my organisation, looking specifically through the lens of organisational culture as part of the organisational construct undergoing change. Whilst the efficacy of culture surveys may be considered by some to be unconvincing they do offer an indicator or a snapshot of some attributes of an organisation at some point in time; if they are helpful for nothing else they do raise an organisations awareness and create an impetus for collective internal reflection (Denison et al., 2014). Within the thesis, I reach into the domain of academic research, research that is sometimes difficult to translate into something useful for everyday managers (Bartunek

et al., 2006) and I also refer occasionally to popular management books. Sparrowe (2005:436) claims that corporate leaders' biographies filling the shelves of bookstores "are the bane of academic leadership researchers" and yet, whilst there may be little in terms of rigorous analysis in these books, they remain popular for a reason and many have been able to translate, into simple practical terms, what academia has been creating.

Through my research, I become increasingly convinced that organisations that take a holistic approach to organisational development looking at the mission, the structure, the organisational climate and the organisational culture simultaneously are likely to be more successful than those that do not (Labovitz and Rosansky, 1997; Novak, 2012; Senn and Hart, 2006). When organisations are able to consider these organisational constructs collectively and evolve them synergistically, it is said that these organisations are moving towards greater alignment (Andriopoulos et al., 2008; Farr et al., 1997; Lobovitz and Rosansky, 1997). Alignment in this case representing a conscious decision to ensure coherence between organisational constructs so that the mission is not impeded by the organisational structure, neither by the climate nor by the organisational culture. It is claimed that organisations that have alignment along strategy, structure and culture are more effective than those that do not (Lobovitz and Rosansky, 1997). Misalignment of the culture, or what Cameron and Quinn (2011) call "cultural incongruence" is said to drain the energy and focus of the organisation.

### **3.1 Informing the first AR cycle – culture and leadership.**

The literature review themes are shown below and whilst this reflects the initial research focus, it does not represent the chronology, that being highly cyclical and iterative. The themes covered by the research can be grouped together within two phases:

#### **Phase 1**

- Command and Control
- Their influences upon Organisational Culture
- And their relationships with Leadership

As Phase 1 completed I performed interviews and analysis, reflected upon the results and tried to make sense of the emergent themes and through this, a new more pervasive organisational phenomenon emerged. This is disclosed and discussed more fully in Chapter 5 as it informed the direction my next major action research cycle and literature review took through Phase 2:

## Phase 2

- Leadership “Say/Do” Gap
- Authentic Leadership
- Authentic Leadership Development

### 3.1.1 Command and Control (C<sup>2</sup>) Influence

It would be naïve, maybe even negligent, to consider leadership and organisational culture within a military context without exploring the literature around C<sup>2</sup>; an organisational phenomenon that is profoundly prevalent and pervasive in military organisations (Krulak: 1996). As pervasive as C<sup>2</sup> is within military organisations, and as clear in its intent as it may be for the Marine Corps (Ibid), to many within the ranks, it is said that it remains insufficiently defined nor is it properly understood (Oprean, 2012: 117) and it is consequently subject to a host of interpretations and meanings. Schein (2010: ix) makes the point that C<sup>2</sup> “has become a cultural archetype even as clear descriptions of just what this means have become more elusive when we observe organisations carefully”. Howieson and Kahn (2002 citing Moll, 1978) build upon this pointing out “One of the least controversial things that can be said about command and control is that it is poorly understood and subject to wildly different interpretation” and this may indeed be impacting the organisational culture and leadership in a way that invokes unhelpful side effects for military organisations who espouse the desire to change.

Providing a categorical definition of C<sup>2</sup> then appears to be a challenge given the wide set of definitions that exist (Howieson and Kahn, 2002; Schein, 2010) but for the sake of my research I opted to frame C<sup>2</sup> based upon three definitions that were specifically associated with military contexts:

Eriksson and Leifler (2010: 158) define C<sup>2</sup> as:

*“describing what people commanding others do: directing the work of subordinate units and coordinating their efforts toward a common goal (command) making sure that orders are carried out monitoring outcomes of all actions (control)”*

and Meijer (2012: 3) as:

*“the exercise of authority and direction by a properly designated commander over assigned forces in the accomplishment of a mission”*

and Elkins (1998: 2) as:

***“C<sup>2</sup>, often thought of as a single element is actually two separate processes. Subtle in their differences, command is the authority and responsibility to give direction to and be responsible for the actions of others. Control is the ability to influence the outcome of individual or group actions. In the military, command and then control go together as hand and glove.”***

C<sup>2</sup> is implemented in NATO, and thereby across the militaries of the NATO nations, to enforce standardisation and consistency in order to encourage conformity within NATO militaries (McChrystal: 2015). C<sup>2</sup> attempts to deliver predictability so that NATO does not appear as a collection of individual militaries, but rather one where forces are connected, interoperable and operating under a consistent unity of command (Lindley-French, 2012). C<sup>2</sup> emphasises leadership as characterised by rank, compliance and coercion; transactional tendencies sometimes described as “hard” leadership (Redmond et al., 2015). Schein (2010) describes military entities as essentially coercive organisations, organisations that are essentially founded upon “commands from high” (Groysberg and Slind, 2012: 80). C<sup>2</sup> environments are said to be the domain of “authoritarianism” and of “hard power” (Grint: 14).

Redmond et al. (2015: 13) identify militaries as working within a context where “seniority within the military requires obedience and subordination” and they go on to reinforce that the concept of subordination is an essential characteristic for military operations. Military C<sup>2</sup> exists in order to “attain a high degree of reliability of behaviour, an unusual degree of conformity with prescribed patterns of action.” (Merton, 1940: 562). Highly effective for the battlefield, but perhaps “an unchallenged insistence upon punctilious adherence to formalised procedures” (Ibid: 563) is not fuelling transformation, but rather getting in the way. It is claimed that up to the 1960s management theories and practice was attuned to the creation of hierarchical bureaucracies. These organisations were based upon uniformity, stability, repeatability, where “Clear lines of decision-making authority, standardised rules and procedures, and control and accountability mechanisms were valued as the keys to success.” Cameron and Quinn (2011). Yet few twenty-first century organisations consider “constancy, sameness, or status quo” (Ibid) as an organisational enabler. On the contrary, in the “white water” environment where leaders now ply their trade, transformation has become the norm (Antonacopoulou and Bento, 2004). Jackson and Parry (2010:75) state that “The increasing globalization of trade, finance, production and consumption presents a complex array of business challenges and opportunities

that require an unprecedented level of intercultural competence and understanding.” Few would argue that it is not the role of the military to ensure that they keep up with society as it becomes ever more complex, interconnected and multicultural.

The Sandhurst leadership guide (UK MOD, 2014: 6) states that Command has legal status “**as the authority vested in an individual for the direction, coordination and control of military forces**” it goes on to say that “**Unlike command, the power of leadership is not established through military law and vested authority rather, leadership achieves ends by ‘example, persuasion and compulsion. It is dynamic and inspirational.**” (Ibid: 6). It is also starting to sound much more “leaderful” (Raelin, 2003), pluralistic and empowering (Abrashoff, 2002; Manz and Sims, 1991; Novak; 2012).

### 3.1.2 C<sup>2</sup>’s Pervasiveness and Power

C<sup>2</sup> then is not just a noun, a passive descriptor of a leadership system or management paradigm, it is also a verb, people “perform” C<sup>2</sup>; consequently, it influences to a large extent how leaders lead. It shows up over and over again with some leaders so dependent upon it that they claim C<sup>2</sup> is bigger than the organisation. The Commandant of the US Marine Corps in his doctrinal publication states that “Organisation is an important tool of command and control” (Krulak: 1996, 87) and goes on to purport that C<sup>2</sup> “is essential to survival and success in any competitive or cooperative enterprise. Command and control is a fundamental requirement for life and growth, survival and success for any system” (Ibid: 36). In the military, it is very clear that C<sup>2</sup> is a way of life.

Looking again at the C<sup>2</sup> definition Eriksson and Leifler (2010: 158) the link between leadership and management as practised in the military and C<sup>2</sup> is evident:

*“Describing what people **commanding** others do: **directing** the work of subordinate units and **coordinating** their efforts toward a common goal (command) making sure that **orders** are carried out **monitoring** outcomes of all actions (control)”*

A military organisation can be described as “a coercive hierarchy”, reinforced through elaborate rules, rituals and power classifications (Redmond et al., 2015: 13) where high power distances can be reinforced authoritatively (Schein, 2010: 164), commanded and controlled. Gerras et al. (2008: 21) make the point that “of all the Army’s underlying cultural assumptions, the one that is most misaligned with the contemporary environment is “power distance”.



(Hofstede: 1980). It will also, he claims, be very difficult to change since a highly controlled, regimented organisation trying to adapt and change creates real tensions for leadership (Cadle et al., 2004; March, 2008).

Hofstede's (1980) definition of "power distance" can be summarised as the range of the delta that any society or organisation accepts between those at the top and those at the bottom of that organisation or society. In organisations with a high-power distance, authoritarian leadership and a more autocratic decision-making process are more likely to be accepted and expected. In lower power distance organisations members would anticipate more autonomy and expect to have a more input, more participation and room for manoeuvre. Considering explanations like these there can be little doubt that military commands operate as high-power distance entities.

### 3.1.3 Criticisms of C<sup>2</sup>

Despite some of the obvious military advantages of C<sup>2</sup> and the pervasiveness and resilience of C<sup>2</sup> organisations generally (Lindley-French; 2012), there seems to be a price to pay for this approach. It is not without criticism and some academic researchers and military scholars have been more critical of the cultures and leadership paradigms found within typical military organisations. Jackson and Parry (2010: 61) offer the view that hierarchical C<sup>2</sup> based organisations are not as effective as flatter cross-functional and networked organisations. A challenge reiterated by Van der Voet (2014: 386) who informs that typically within public sector organisations, like defence, that "a high degree of formalization can also be expected to impede processes of adaptation and learning". An increasing amount of academic and practice-based literature predicts, if not C<sup>2</sup>'s demise, its fall from grace (Abrashoff, 2002; Manz and Sims, 1991; Novak; 2012; Raelin, 2003) yet it appears to be alive and well and particularly resistant to change in NATO. Hardly surprising since C<sup>2</sup> based organisations are designed to be highly robust and consequently hard to influence (Cadle et al., 2004; March, 2008). This makes it a real challenge to get a military organisation to what Lewin (1947) describes as an "unfrozen" stage (Quinn and Weick, 1999), ready to consider how leadership is done today, based inevitably on yesterday, might not be the most effective leadership for tomorrow.

Oprean (2012: 117) states that "C<sup>2</sup> undoubtedly reflects the essence and nature of every military system". C<sup>2</sup> profoundly influences the "rules of interaction and interpretation" (Kalou and Sadler-Smith, 2015: 12), in particular in how one might consider who speaks first, for how long, the approach to turn taking, organisational silence (Morrison and Milliken, 2000) and the potential to interrupt. Within a C<sup>2</sup> environment lower down the "chain of command" that you

are, the more likely it is that you would have the opportunity to practice speaking last, being silent and dealing with interruptions rather than daring to make any. Leadership has the ability to challenge this, to include somehow the voices of all in order to enrich the sense within the organisation often limited through the “suppression of alternative meanings” (McClellan, 2011: 470). Leadership has the power to be able to manipulate, marginalisation or stifle altogether the voices of the followers (Grant and Hardy, 2004: 7). The Australian Army wanted to do something about the suppression of alternatives meanings and introduced “anecdotal circles” (O’Toole et al., 2008) as a process to try and enable people used to keeping quiet to speak up and be heard, it was an attempt to deal with “an organisational need to encourage flexibility and adaptability at all levels” (Ibid.: 29).

#### 3.1.4 Alternatives to C<sup>2</sup>

The military is certainly not immune to the effect of this evolving leadership context but existing research suggests that traditional military leadership and management thinking is overdue a transformation (Alberts and Hayes; 2006; Cebrowski and Garstka, 2004). Military C<sup>2</sup> hardware and the omnipresent eyes of the networked connected world means that C<sup>2</sup> methods of old are rapidly being discovered lacking. Challenges that are thought to be redefining how militaries operate as technology enables the potential for decision making at much lower levels than previously possible (Alberts and Hayes, 2003) and this factor needs to be considered in the way that leadership is enacted. Abrashoff, (2002:104), himself a senior military man at the time, makes the point when stating the C<sup>2</sup> approach “is far from the most efficient way to tap people’s intelligence and skills” and goes on to claim that, in his experience in transforming the culture on board the USS Benfold, controlling less led to him being able to lead more. Interestingly modern military doctrine, taught to perspective new military leaders takes this into account (Various, 2012:60) indicting that “If you lead well, you will not need your rank.”. Leading well is something that all military organisations would like to claim as a core attribute.

There are a few examples where, in spite of C<sup>2</sup>’s pervasiveness and resilience to change, some military entities who appear to have been able to evolve their understanding of C<sup>2</sup> as Curts and Campbell (2006: 15) report a transition in definition of C<sup>2</sup> related to military operations in Iraq from a “Command and Control – Command and Collaborate” mindset. “Command” according to Grint (2008) being more appropriately applied to “critical” problems, problems that imply short timeframes between decision making and action (Ibid: 13) making standardised processes and planning stages that leave little room for uncertainty; yet transformation is all about the

exploration of uncertainty, of pushing the boundaries of what was previously known in order to evolve. Denning (2007: 217) illuminates the issue when he states that “Leadership, the ability to connect people to meaningful goals without hierarchical power to compel compliance, will become a requirement for organisational survival”. Gerras et al. (2008: 16) claim that the US Army “will fail to be a high-performance organisation in the twenty-first century if leaders fail to encourage thoughtful dissent”, and many young leaders are more than ever ready for a change (Danahy, 2017).

It seems somewhat ironic, that when very many military leaders reach the “top” of their profession, they often espouse the values of modern, pluralistic and inclusive leadership and appear to distance themselves from the behaviours of middle level leaders still grappling with the C<sup>2</sup> mindset (Dempsey: 2013; McChrystal: 2011, 2014; Myers: 2012; Powell: 2011; Welsh: 2013). Although one might be sceptical about just how sincere, how authentic, they are being; as Chisholm (2012: 9) points out “The contemporary military pays considerable lip service to initiative and discretion, but in practice afford subordinate officers relatively little such”, hinting at an organisational phenomenon of authenticity that emerged through my research and which I will come back to in detail within the thesis. Sparrowe (2005: 419) claims that a lack of authenticity is close to the “heart of the crisis in contemporary corporate leadership”. Hofstede et al. (2010: 332) warn that “leadership theories that do not take collective expectations of subordinates into account are basically dysfunctional” and this “bottom-up” influence is often discussed but rarely seen, its talked about but not implemented. Interestingly Hofstede et al. (2010: xx) claim that it is not untypical that when “foreign theories are taught to leaders they are often ‘preached but not practised’” reaffirming Chisholm’s (2012) view that the talk is all too often not translated into the walk.

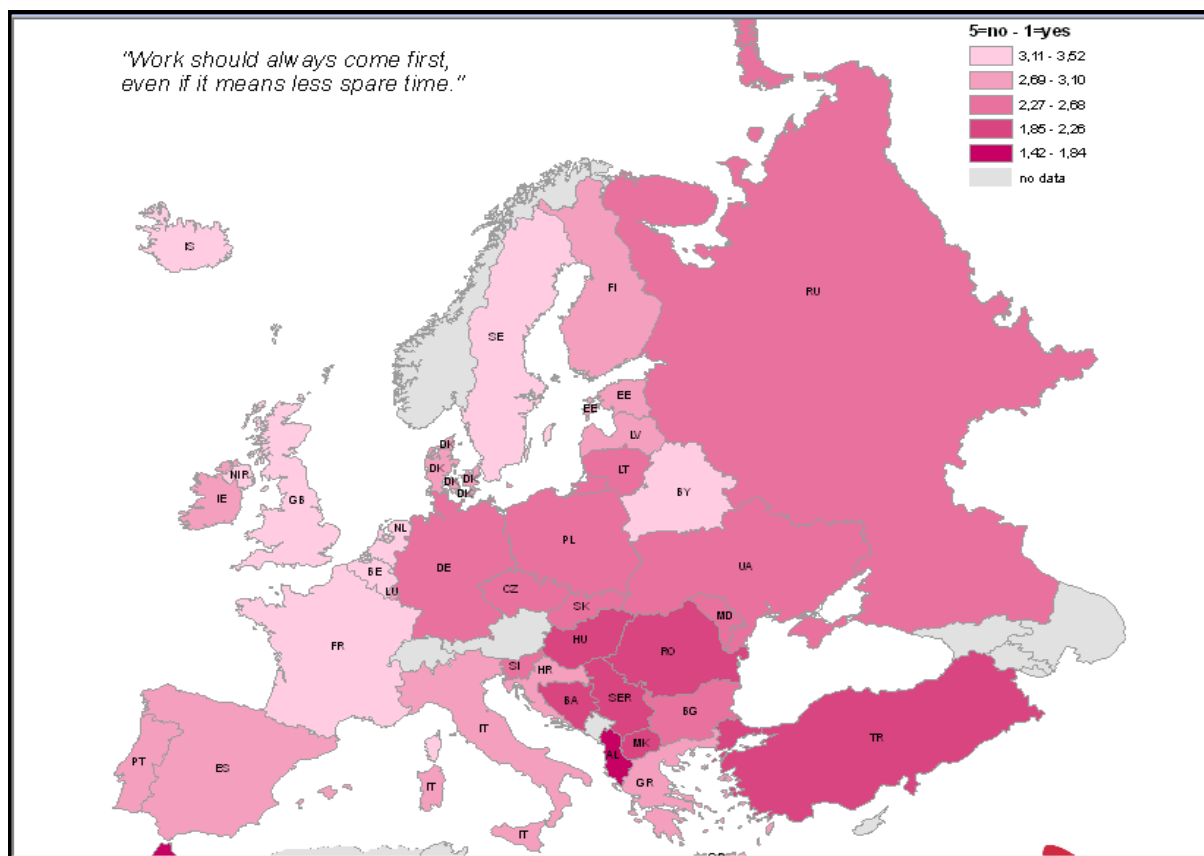
### 3.1.5 National and Service Influences

Clearly military understanding of C<sup>2</sup> impacts leadership profoundly but there are also other significant influences that make their presence felt. Two powerful influences are continuously at play in any joint multinational military organisation; those being nationality based, influences from the leader’s place of origin, and service based, influences that came from what these leaders experienced within their specific military history.

#### 3.1.5.1 *National Influences Upon Leadership and Organisational Culture*

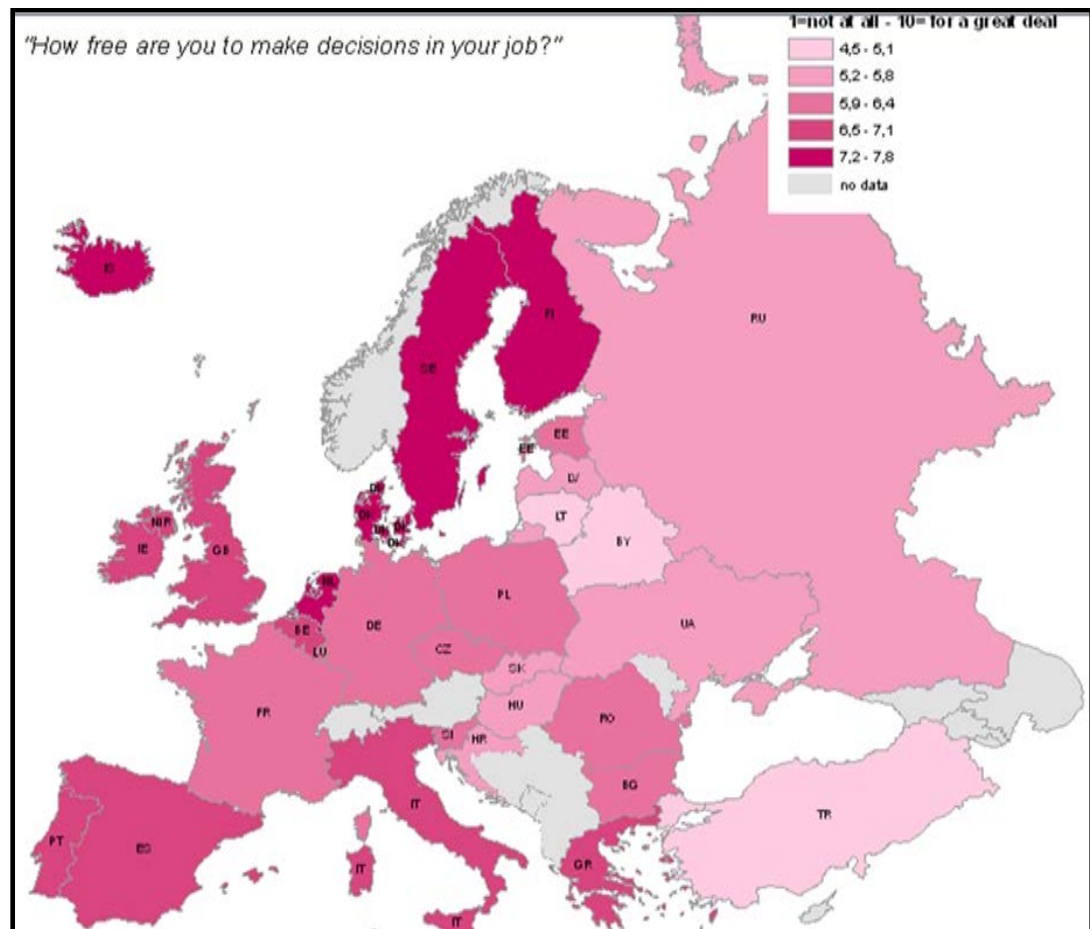
Demographic factors and national preferences have a profound influence on people in the workplace; impacting the norms around speaking out or the ability to challenge the leadership,

the latitude to act autonomously or offer alternative views (European Values Study, 2004). Lok and Crawford (2003: 334) found that “national culture can produce statistically significant moderating effects” on any outcomes. The European Values Study (2014) is a useful resource indicating differences across a range of aspects. It is a cross-national, longitudinal survey that provides insights into the beliefs, preferences, attitudes, values and opinions of citizens all over Europe. It is a unique research project on how Europeans think about, inter alia, work, politics and society in general. For example, considering only the relationship between work and free time across many of the NATO countries the study reveals fundamental differences. Figure 7 below is taken from the 2004 European Values Study and reveals differences that are typical across a number of organisational themes. The study also reveals that how people think about leadership, what they do and say are heavily influenced by where they came from well before we start to consider the military context.



**Figure 7 - Extract from a 2004 European Values Study**

In another example from the 2004 European values study people were asked about empowerment in terms of decision making and as can be seen in Figure 8 the analysis revealed significant differences within the general populations of those countries.



**Figure 8 - Extract from a 2004 European Values Study**

It is from many of those countries that NATO attracts its personnel and despite many years of increased European integration significant differences exist that influence how people expect to be led and how to think about and therefore behave in the work environment. This foundation is the basis from which, as young men and women in uniform, their continuing experiential development occurs. Development that is now further reinforced as they experience their own national flavour of an interpretation of  $C^2$  within their military's. (Romie and Lapadus, 2004).

It is not surprising then that by the time these leaders and managers occupy a NATO position, their understanding of "how to be" within a multinational organisation is to some extent already determined. So even though NATO strives for standardization through policy and procedures (Davis, 2009) the reality is that narrower national or service contexts can lead to very different approaches within organisations. In an operational setting, these differing approaches are

sometimes called “caveats”<sup>3</sup> and these caveats are clear examples of national influences at work. Auerswald and Saideman (2012) in their assessment of how national caveats impact military operations make the case that international military operations are influenced by a nation’s political/military history.

Awareness in a NATO environment of the impact of these national cultures is learned largely through experiences, sometimes frustrating and time-consuming events where leaders slowly realise that how leadership was enacted in their own historically and demographical bounded contexts does not work so effectively in NATO. Jackson and Parry (2010: 75) indicate that, when considering national cultures influence on leadership that multinational leaders must be ever cognizant to “the moderating effect that culture can have on leadership processes.” It encourages multinational leaders then to think carefully about their leadership approach and creates the need to be intentional about the own organisation’s culture. For as Schein (2010: 22) puts it, ***“The bottom line for leaders is that if they do not become conscious of the cultures in which they are embedded, those cultures will manage them.”*** Being managed by your organisation’s culture doesn’t appear to be within the frameworks that military leaders operate under and seems to be at odds with the philosophy of command and control.

#### **3.1.5.2      Service Influences Upon Leadership and Organisational Culture**

The moderating effects of national influences upon joint military organisations are not the only ones affecting organisational behaviours since even the individual services (Navy, Marines, Army and Air Force) have their own histories that have shaped their leadership, cultures and behaviours. A “joint” command is a command where the Navy, Marines, Army, Airforce and increasingly very many civilians are merged into a “joint” organisation. At a recent military leadership seminar, I was introduced to the following light-hearted explanation regarding challenges in operating “jointly” (across the services):

***“One reason the Military Services have trouble operating jointly is that they don't speak the same language.***

***For example, if you told Navy personnel to "secure a building," they would turn off the lights and lock the doors. The Army would occupy the building so no one could enter. Marines would assault the building,***

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<sup>3</sup> Caveats are the rules and procedures which Nation’s decide unilaterally for their personnel when they are operating under a NATO mission or within a NATO command.

*capture it, and defend it with suppressive fire and close combat. The Air Force, on the other hand, would take out a three-year lease with an option to buy.”*

Single service cultures reinforce the risk of organisational stove piping whereby “exaggerated unit loyalty and identity can result in disrespect for, and isolation from, others military units” (Davis, 2009: 49). Davis provides a practical example when describing the challenges in trying to integrate Canadian single services into joint services culminating in what senior officers referred to as “a decade of darkness” where morale and confidence were at an unprecedented low ebb (Ibid: 76). “Strong single service cultures do exist” claims Davis (Ibid: 48) and she makes the point that they can impede transformation, ironically an important feature of a “transformational” command like the JWC.

### 3.1.6 Why Research Organisational Culture?

In addition to the influences of national culture and service type upon leadership, organisations are also said to have cultures of their own and it is said that one of the major features distinguishing leadership from management is a concern for the organisation’s culture (Schein, 2010: 195). Schein (2010: 3) offers that organisational culture and leadership could be considered to be “two sides of the same coin” and goes on to remark that “Organisational culture is ultimately created, embedded, evolved, and ultimately manipulated by leaders.”. The dynamic process of organisational culture creation, sustainment and evolution are “the essence of leadership” (Ibid).

More than 20 years ago Schein (1996) offered that too little research attention had been given to understanding how culture impacted the functioning of organisations. It seems that this charge may now be somewhat dated as research and practice have raised the profile of organisational cultures academically and practically. Dauber et al., (2012) report that organisational culture is “recognised as an essential influential factor in analysing organisations in various contexts” (Ibid: 1). Cameron and Quinn, (2011: 307) make the point that “Most organisational scholars and observers now recognize that organisational culture has a powerful effect on the performance and long-term effectiveness of organisations.”. For good or bad organisational culture is now considered to have a significant impact on how an organisation fairs, and what the organisation focusses on. Gardner et al. (2005: 344) bring our attention to the “recent ethical meltdowns by leaders of a host of Fortune 500 companies” and increasingly it is not the strategy, the structures, nor even the policies that end up being highlighted as having failed, but rather the culture prevalent within the organisation (Kotter and Heskett, 1992). A



view supported by George and Sims (2007) where they express that the last decade has been one characterised with failures for multinational organisations who, once the analysis was completed, blamed much of the outcome on inappropriate leadership and organisational cultures; examples include BP, ENRON, the IOC and more recently FIFA and VW (Örtenblad et al., 2016). Indeed Cameron and Quinn (2011: 229) claim that culture may be attributed to as much as 75% of failed organisational change efforts. Several studies reported that the most frequently cited reason given for failure was a neglect of the organisation's culture. In other words, failure to change the organisation's culture doomed to failure the other kinds of organisational changes that were initiated (Ibid.). With some organisational culture issues being touted as creating problems serious enough that the survival of the organisation was even threatened (Cameron, 1997).

### 3.1.7 Organisational Culture

Despite an apparent surge in interest from practitioners and academics alike, there is little agreement on how we might conceptualise the phenomenon of organisational culture (Jung et al., 2009: 1087). According to Cameron and Quinn (2011: 499) more than 150 interpretations of culture already existed in the early 50's. Parmelli et al., (2011: 1) characterise organisational culture as an "anthropological metaphor" hinting at how challenging it might be to define uncontestably this phenomenon. Challenges in defining organisational culture creates difficulties for researchers, the organisational culture field is recognised as being a complex and volatile subject to research and even seasoned academics consider it to be challenging to study organisational culture systematically (Schein, 2010). This often leads to studies in this field being performed interpretively which in itself brings challenges and risks for the researcher. Organisational culture is a metaphorical phenomenon that directly or indirectly affects all other organisational constructs (Dauber et al.: 2012; Schein: 1985 and Farr et al.: 1997). Mumby (2011: 1156) for example informs that "any interpretive analysis will essentially be partial and incomplete; cultural meaning in systems are infinitely complex and will defy any analysts attempt to fully capture them."

Time has not helped to clarify what is described as a "complex metaphor" (Meek: 1988; Smircich: 1983) although there is some agreement in the literature that organisational culture refers to the taken-for-granted values, underlying assumptions, expectations, and definitions that characterize organisations and their members. Cameron and Quinn (2011) claim that a "key ingredient" and the "most powerful factor" in differentiating successful and failed companies is the organisations culture (Ibid.: 291). It follows then that culture is both an asset



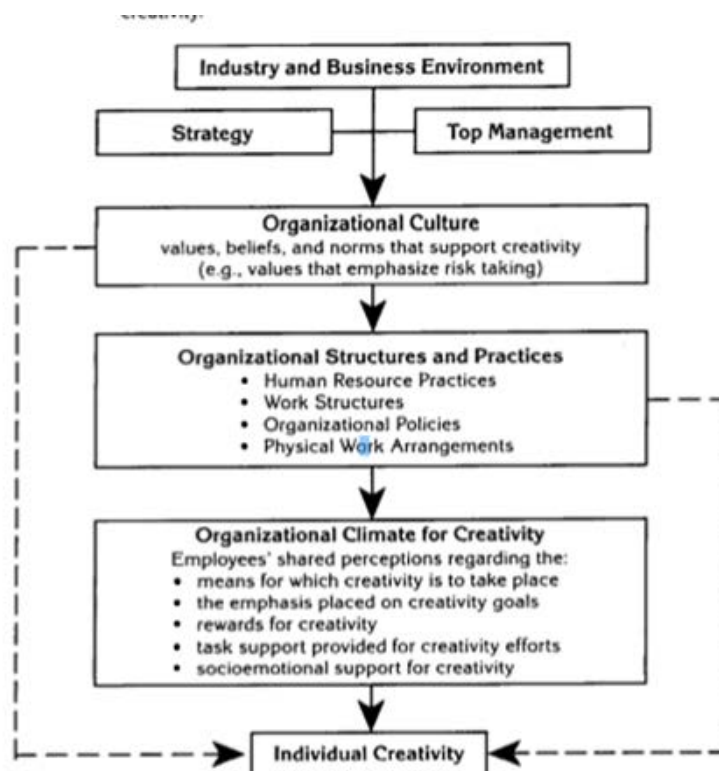
and a liability for as we have seen, culture is a powerful influence on an organisational behaviour because the shared beliefs and values to represent basic assumptions and preferences that guide such behaviour. Further, the influence of an organisation's culture is subtle because many of these underlying premises remain outside of people's awareness. Nonetheless, an organisation's culture can provide a "lens through which an organisation can be understood and interpreted" (Parmelli et al., 2011:2) and is profoundly related to the organisation's leadership. There is it seems an important coexistent relationship between leadership and organisational culture; one end of the spectrum claims that culture is shaped by leadership, indeed many believe that an organisation's culture is tied fundamentally to the founder's purpose exemplified through shared leadership values and beliefs exposed during an organisation's early years (Hofstede et al., 2010). Others do not limit the ability to shape an organisation's culture to only the leaders; Jackson and Parry (2010: 73) claim that many academics now recognise that organisational culture is "always in the process of being created, not exclusively by leaders but by everybody concerned with the organisation". Schein (2010: 3) claims that culture impacts the "here and now" of organisational life as a "coercive background structure that influences us in multiple ways.". Organisational culture is said to reflect "the prevailing ideology that people carry inside their heads". It conveys a sense of identity to employees, provides unwritten and often unspoken guidelines for how to get along in the organisation, and it helps stabilize the social system that they experience." (Cameron and Quinn, 2011: 514). Culture is constantly re-enacted and created by our interactions with others and shaped by our own behaviour (Schien, 2010: 3).

Organisational culture is said to "epitomise the expressive character of organisation" (Martins and Terblanche, 2003: 65) and it represents the organisation's collective historical values and beliefs. Gerras et al., (2008: 2) state that "While military culture is often used effectively as an overarching label for the military's personality, way of thinking, or values, there is little literature that defines the term military culture". Organisational cultures are based upon assumptions held by organisational members (Martins and Terblanche, 2003), tested through personal experience, that have become propagated sufficiently to inform how the organisational members "perceive, think, and feel" their way through organisational life (Schein, 1990: 111). Organisational cultures influence how people interact, Schein (2010: 17) makes the point that "Culture is pervasive and influences all aspects of how an organisation deals with its primary task, its various environments, and its internal operations.". Yet it is also hidden from view (Cameron and Quinn, 2011), its powerful yet subtle effects normally

escaping the attention of the people it affects most (Sathe, 1973). Organisational cultures exert often unseen influence within the workplace and are considered to be significantly linked to “areas such as performance and commitment” (Lok and Crawford, 2003: 323; Kotter and Heskett, 1992).

### 3.1.8 Organisational Climate and Culture

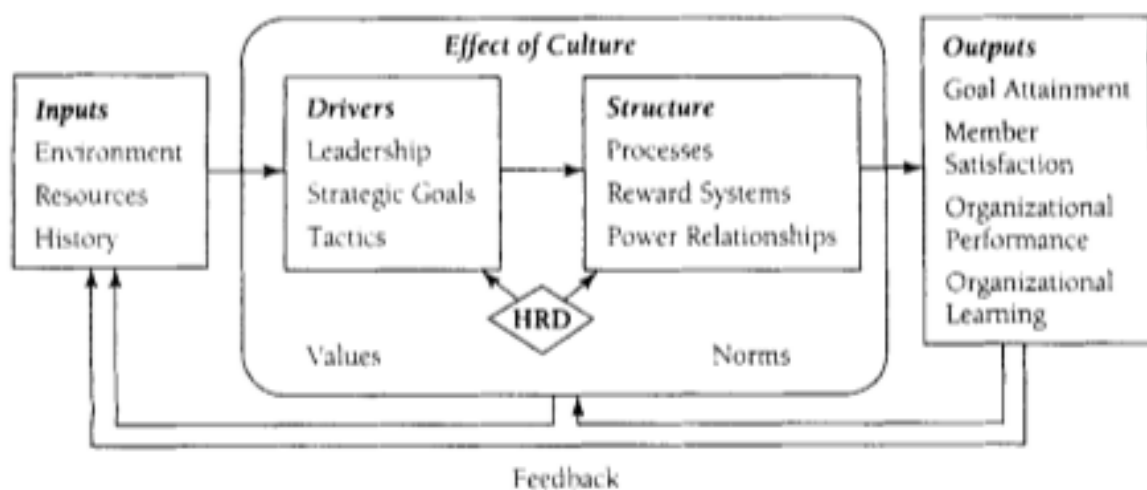
Organisational climate and organisational culture are sometimes represented as being one and the same thing and there is not always alignment in academic circles regarding the concept of climate. There is a growing trend to research climate and culture differently with climate being available for research through quantitative methodologies being “comparative and nomothetic” in nature. Culture, on the other hand, has traditionally (although not exclusively) been researched qualitatively, “contextualised and idiographic” in nature (Denison, 1996: 625). Farr et al. (1997) developed a conceptual model (shown in Figure 9 below) that demonstrates visually the climate/culture relationship.



**Figure 9 - Organisational Culture and Climate Conceptual Model (Farr et al., 1997)**

Dauber et al., (2012: 9) relates an organisation’s formal policies and procedures as “strategies”, Schein (1985) refers to the same phenomena as “espoused values”, what is written or spoken,

and Farr et al. (1997), refers to this as the organisational “climate”. In order to provide a conceptual framework and aware that diverse views that exist in the literature I needed to identify a conceptual framework that I felt worked for my context. Within the research, I found that the most relative approach for considering climate in my organisation is expressed within Farr et al.’s definition as supported by Schneider et al. (1996:8) that organisational climates are “based on the policies, practices, procedures, and routines that they are subject to”. I also wanted to find a conceptual model that offered an understanding of culture and its influence upon performance and its relations with other organisational attributes like structures, performance and leadership. Here I found that Semler’s (1997) model below encapsulated these attributes and the relationship between them. This model appears below as Figure 10:



**Figure 10 - Leadership, Structures And Culture Impact On Organisational Output  
(Semler, 1997)**

Another difference that encourages me to decompose culture and climate into separate but interrelated phenomena is that the individualised, hidden from view attributes of culture means that “organisational culture is a contested reality” (Denison, 1996: 640 citing Jermier, 1991). Climate, on the other hand, are represented by tangible artefacts, documents, policies, seating arrangements etc. An organisations climate drives the conversations in the corridors, the stories that pervade an organisation, it informs the descriptions “that happen to and around employees that they are able to describe” (Schneider et al., 1996:12). Organisational cultures on the other hand are “informal social structures and collective sense making” capabilities, they are held in the minds of organisational members in such way as to “guide behaviour and facilitate shared

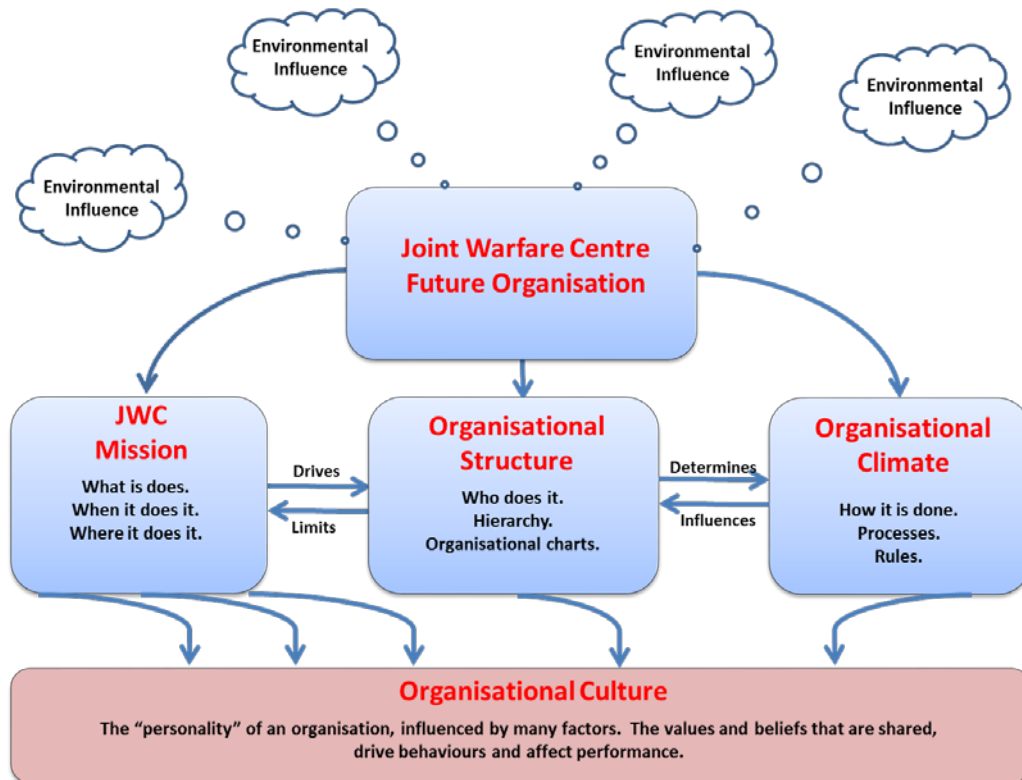
meaning” (Denison et al., 2014: 146). Schein (2010: 400) offers that organisational cultures are learned solutions for understanding and stabilizing our environment and these norms and values are related to how things get done in an organisation.

### 3.1.9 Studying Leadership and Organisational Culture Health Warnings

Jackson and Parry (2010: 71) warn against studying leadership and culture together, claiming it is akin to “asking for trouble as culture has been defined, debated and disputed to an even greater extent than leadership”. Still, despite the obvious warnings regarding empirical evidence generation organisational cultures offer intriguing windows from which to view and potentially change an organisation; Jung et al (2009: 1087) claim that “organisational culture is widely considered to be one of the most significant factors in reforming and modernising public administration and service delivery” and the military considers itself a public service. Edgar Schein (2010: 363) expresses that leaders more and more need to become managers of organisational culture claiming “This need is now greater than ever because globalism and information technology are creating a whole new set of cultural challenges”.

### 3.1.10 Literature Informed JWC Contextual Model

At this point, it is worth bringing together the literature and the context to show what the literature means in terms of my framing of the investigation. Relating the research context to the literature I created a contextual model from which to position how all these organisational constructs come together. Informed by Farr et al.’s (1997) model and Semler’s (1997) model introduced in the literature along with Denison’s (1996: 640) interpretation of culture and climate I develop in the thesis a contextual model that depicts an organisation’s culture as a foundational abstract, operating for the most part below the surface of day to day interaction but influencing and being influenced by the whole of the organisation. The contextual conceptual model attempts to reveal how the different aspects of mission, structure, climate and culture come together and create our organisational realities, and consequently the environment from which leadership is enacted. Figure 11 is an attempt to visualise this contextual model and brings the external forces pressing our post-2014 organisation. It can be interpreted in the following manner; the geo-political factors identified in the context description create the post-2014 environment for my practice. That post-2014 context determines our mission that drives our organisational structures, structures that are also limiting the mission if they are not appropriate. This model will be further developed through an analysis of NATO JWC specific information within Chapter 5, the story.



**Figure 11 - JWC Alignment Contextual Model**

### 3.1.11 JWC Environment

Fiol and Lyles (1985: 804) claim that in order to secure long-term survival “organisations align with their environments” in other words the mission of the organisation should be enabled by the structure and that structure should be coherent with that mission. The climate and culture of the organisation should also be coherent with the mission; for example, an organisation whose mission is rapid development might have agile structures; it would value new ideas and have a climate where innovation was rewarded and encouraged. Encouraged through policy, like some companies (e.g. Google, Hewlett-Packard and 3M) offering days when employees can work on anything they like as long as it is shared at the end of the day with the business (Pink, 2009). It would have a culture that supported innovation and welcome ideas from all levels in the organisation.

### 3.1.12 Leadership Defined?

If organisational culture is somewhat nebulous and difficult phenomenon to define the literature on leadership is equally diverse and inconclusive. Leadership appears to be a complex construct that has no universally accepted definition, indeed some believe that it is even

unhelpful to attempt to try and define it at all (Glazer and Rexrode, 2015). Pye (2005: 32 citing Dubrin, 2000) indicated that 35,000 “leadership” definitions already existed in academic literature. Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995: 220) make the case that despite years of research “and thousands of studies” into leadership, there remains a lack of clarity on what it is and how best it can be achieved. Avolio et al. (2009: 422) reveal that contemporary leadership research has evolved from a focus on individual leaders and their characteristics to a wider perspective embracing a spectrum of contextual and follower influences. Leadership has become a much broader field of research with both academia and practice expending increasing efforts to understanding leadership and its effects within an organisation (Ibid: 423). Increasingly it is acknowledged that the historical focus on the “leader” to understand “leadership” is not enough and critically context (Blanchard, 2010), followers and their interrelationships (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995: 221) feature as being important factors to be considered by leadership researchers. Therefore, instead of trying to defend one or other leadership definition I determined instead to look into my organisation and consider what leadership actually does rather than trying to describe what it is.

### 3.1.13 Leadership Influences Followers

Most leadership scholars appear to agree with Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995: 225) that “leadership is a multifaceted construct involving aspects of the leader, the follower, and the dyadic relationship between the two.” So that when one is influential in shaping the behaviour and values of others, we think of that as “leadership” and are creating the conditions for new culture formation (Schein, 2010: 3).

Leadership though is not “management on steroids” (Higgs, 2009) and when Higgs reviewed “bad” leadership he identified four central themes (Ibid:168):

- Abusing power in order to hide inadequacies, reinforce self-image or to serve personal goals.
- Bullying, coercion and arbitrary treatment of employees.
- Limiting employee initiative and over-exercising control.
- Breaking the rules when it suits them. Not walking the talk.

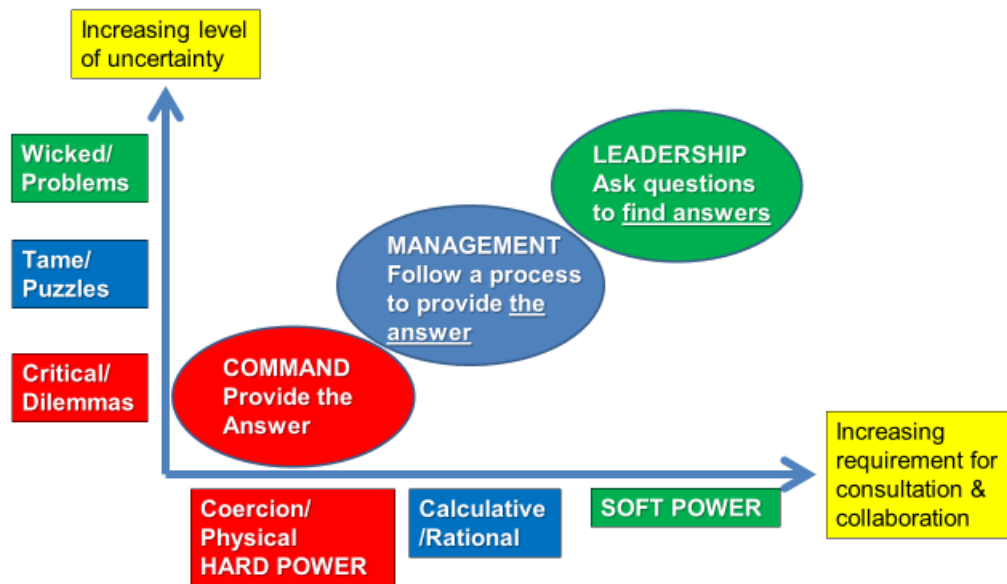
Ironically “bad” leadership might be quite tempting for an organisation that has a transactional focus since “‘bad’ leadership can result in short-term performance success,” (Ibid: 169; citing Benson and Hogan, 2008). According to Grint (2008) “bad” leadership is sometimes highly

appropriate and is often exactly what is required within C<sup>2</sup> environments (see Figure 12). This appears especially important for critical situations, ones that are time-bound and un-requiring of collaboration or consultation. This appears to be the domain of the transactional and certainly a military environment has much more in common with the characteristics identified as “transactional”. Yukl’s analysis of leadership concepts (1999: 301) claims that “instrumental compliance is most important for transactional leadership”.

#### 3.1.14 Leadership Influences Organisations Adapting To Their Environments

Leaders are said to need to align their organisations with the environment (Fiol and Lyles: 1985) or risk irrelevance. Examples like Kodak, Nokia, Polaroid, Blockbuster Video, XEROX and BlackBerry are useful popular case studies in this regard where confidence and complacency to the organisational environment are said to have caused profound problems leading to, in some cases, existential threats. Yukl (1999: 288) reiterates that it is an “essential leadership function to help the organisation adapt to its environment”. As I indicated with Chapter 2 the NATO JWC is part of a transformational command that serves through development, education and training a transactional command. Considering leadership adaptation to the environment one could consider that the transactional command would exude transactional leadership and the transformational command would exude transformational leadership.

The transactional/transformation debate is not an either/or issue, it is highly contextual and is much more of a spectrum of behaviours that shift across circumstances (Yukl: 1999). Circumstances that range from critical, urgent requiring the decisive timely intervention of the leader, the transactional; to challenges that are more complex, interdependent and potentially developmental, the transformational. Grint (2008) provides a useful guide for leaders to make sense of when a particular style across the transactional/transformational spectrum is most appropriate. Transactional leadership being within the bottom left domain in red, and transformational leadership being located at the top right as shown in green.



**Figure 12 - Power and Problem Relationship**

**Adapted from Grint (2008: 14).**

### 3.1.15 Transactional Leadership

Transactional leadership is said to rely upon request fulfilment of the leaders based on their “hierarchical status within the organisation” and followers comply based upon a “formal obligation to the leader” (Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995: 232). Clarke et al., (2011) classify transactional leadership as being related to “content”, where “exchanges and negotiations” are used by the leader to specify “goals and conditions” where followers are rewarded for achieving those goals. The literature informs that the prevalent leadership approach usually found in military hierarchical organisations is transactional and consequently the task of delivery “transformation” is made more difficult. Transactional organisations are highly apt for “decision making and rule enforcement” and especially for “tame” problems (Grint, 2008: 11) or puzzles where there is a “right” answer and it can be located through the application of a process. The price to pay for that decision-making ability in critical situations is that they tend not to be “innovative”; a rather important aspect to “transformation”.



### 3.1.16 Transformational Leadership

When considering how a “Transformational Command” might operate it could be assumed that such a remit would lead to a prevailing organisational culture that would support an engaged and/or distributed style of leadership (Bolden *et al*, 2011; Heskett, 2011) and that this would sit in stark contrast to the prevailing transactional leadership style in the organisation as I will make clear from the research. (Gerras *et al.*, 2008; Redmond *et al.*, 2015). Transformational leadership is often considered more inclusive and egalitarian than transactional approaches and as adding “incremental value to more traditional transactional leadership behaviours” (Hargis *et al.*, 2011: 53). Transformational leadership is a “modelled” process based upon the primacy of ideals and values aimed at inspiring, stimulating and engaging. It is supported by leaders who encourage their followers to “contribute to intellectual stimulation by questioning assumptions and challenging situations” (Wodak *et al.*, 2011: 594) which is a far cry from C<sup>2</sup> as it is widely understood, described and enacted.

Yukl (1999: 291) highlights that transactional and transformation leadership are not really opposite ends of a spectrum but that many of the traits overlap and can exist with both theories. He goes on to criticise those who appear to claim that transformational leadership is the ultimate goal for leaders, remarking that this type of leadership “can have negative outcomes for followers in the organisation” citing the emotional connections said to be established under a transformational leadership as responsible for creating dependencies, being “unidirectional”, leading to “self-sacrifices” and the unsustainable expectation of “exceptional effort” (Yukl, 1999: 292). “Transformational leadership seems widely relevant, but there may be situations where it is unnecessary or have negative consequences along with positive ones” (Yukl, 1999: 301). Interestingly I was to discover that descriptions of transformational leaders suggest that this style also has many overlapping features with authentic leaders (Avolio *et al.*, 2004: 806). Transformational leadership and authentic leadership share many of the same components; when Avolio and Gardner (2005: 323) compared authentic leadership with transformational leadership across 26 different themes they found that 21 of them were “focal components” and four others were discussed leaving only one theme to have been absent. There is, it seems, a strong correlation between authentic leadership and transformational leadership, a relationship I come back to later in the thesis.

I have summarised these approaches to leadership in Table 3 below and this will be used as a backdrop to consider how the military might fare compared with these themes within Chapter 5.

Themes	Transactional	Transformational
Leader's source of influence	Rank, position, status, formal, reciprocity	Relationships, character, competence, informal, inspiration
How it operates	Within existing system boundaries	Works to stretch a system, stimulates intellectually
Follower response	Compliance	Commitment
Timescales	Short	Long
Rewards	Promotion, Pay , Privilege	Pride, self esteem, fulfilment
Supervision	Considered vital – close and procedures based	Not vital – distant and loosely directional
Assessment	Evaluation, measurement, historically based	Potential, imaginative, future based
Impacts	Followers behaviour – what they do	Followers values , beliefs and attitudes – how they think
Cultural Impact	Reinforces “what is”	Reveals “what could be”
Appropriate for	Delivering predetermined outcomes	Delivering innovation
Focus on	Discipline, process, standards, rules	Deregulation, change, learning, experimentation
Characterised by	Sameness, routine and repetition	Difference, spontaneity and uniqueness

**Table 3 – Transactional/Transformational Leadership Contrasted**

**(Adapted from Bass, 1990; Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995; Hargis et al., 2011)**

It seems that “transformational leadership” is increasingly relevant. Marquardt (2005) remarks regarding the increasing complexity and global pace of change in the world that “the traditional hierarchical model of leadership that worked yesterday will not work tomorrow.” He goes on to make the point that leaders cannot possibly hope to master all the intricacies of organisational life, he warns that “No one person can master all the data needed to address the complex issues that confront today’s organisations.” (Ibid: 24). Cameron and Quinn (2011:301) claim that “successful companies have developed something special that supersedes corporate strategy, market presence, and technological advantages”, they go on to identify that the “special something” is the development and management of a “unique corporate culture”. In this new era, it is predicted that organisational cultures will become increasingly important in the future (Dillard, 2014). In organisational research involving 34 corporations, Denison (1984) posited that there is indeed a causal relationship between culture and performance and argues

further that when organisations get their culture right they are able to significantly outperform those that do not. An organisation then is much more than an organogram or mission, it comes to life through its people. The symbiotic connections between organisational culture and the people that perform their roles in those organisations are said to be profound, “organisations as we know them are the people in them; if the people do not change, there is no organisational change” (Schneider et al., 1996: 7) and if the leaders do not adapt and change then leadership does not change either.

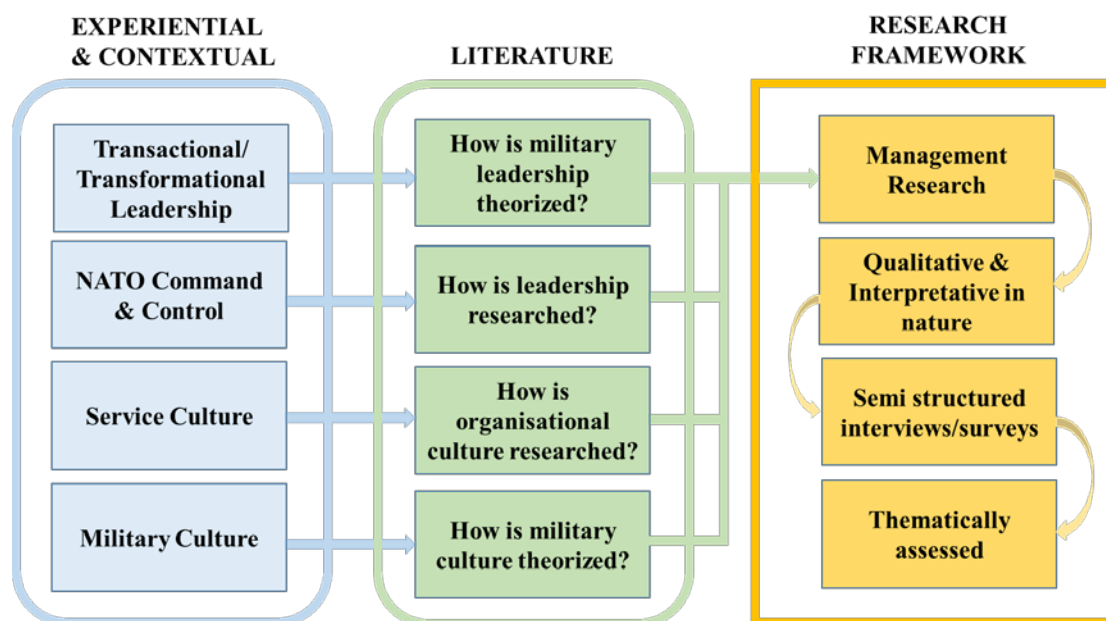
### 3.1.17 Phase 1 Literature Summary

The literature in Phase 1 provided evidence of the historical and pervasive nature of military culture and the precedence of command and control as a regulating and normative function. It provided a grounding into how multinational military organisations are managed and led, how they are commanded and controlled and why this type of approach is as prevalent and entrenched as to become an organisational limiter for a transformational entity like the one I was researching. Reading into the literature on military leadership and C<sup>2</sup> informed me that the military’s dependence upon C<sup>2</sup> is so profound that to consider leadership without paying attention to this phenomenon would lead to an incomplete appreciation or the development of later interventions that were irrelevant or ineffective. The literature describes relevant and recent research into military organisations that claimed that the time was right to rethink C<sup>2</sup>, and that much of the non-military leadership and management research had already indicated its demise many years ago.

The literature review also illuminated an interesting dichotomy revealing that when leaders rose to the top of their organisational structures they were, in many cases, fundamentally different leaders than they were required to be before they had reached these elevated positions. It confirmed that leadership is far from being a static, “born with” phenomenon, but was fluid, contextual and developable. This was to be critical in that the NATO JWC is identified as a “transformational” command and yet that the prevalent leadership style and the associated organisational culture were profoundly “transactional” when compared with the academic literature describing these leadership styles.

The literature described the critical role that leaders can play in working within, or helping to develop, new organisational cultures. It also reinforced that there is no “one size fits all”

organisational culture and reinforced in my mind that organisations with different missions and roles (in my case the operational commands compared with the transformational command) might be far more effective if their organisational culture and leadership was complementary and aligned to their mission. The Phase 1 literature review provided me with a detailed appreciation of how organisational constructs, contexts and personal histories affect leadership and organisational culture and that leadership can be assessed through the analysis (evidence indicating the presence or lack) of certain traits. The literature exposed the relationship between national and service influences and how these come together with the culture of the organisation to frame the leadership context; what is accepted or denied, what is encouraged or deterred. The literature disclosed and emphasised that organisational culture and organisational climate are not the same thing and this led to the development of the JWC Alignment Contextual Model that appears as Figure 11. This Phase 1 literature review and the major concepts drawn from it are shown below in Figure 13.

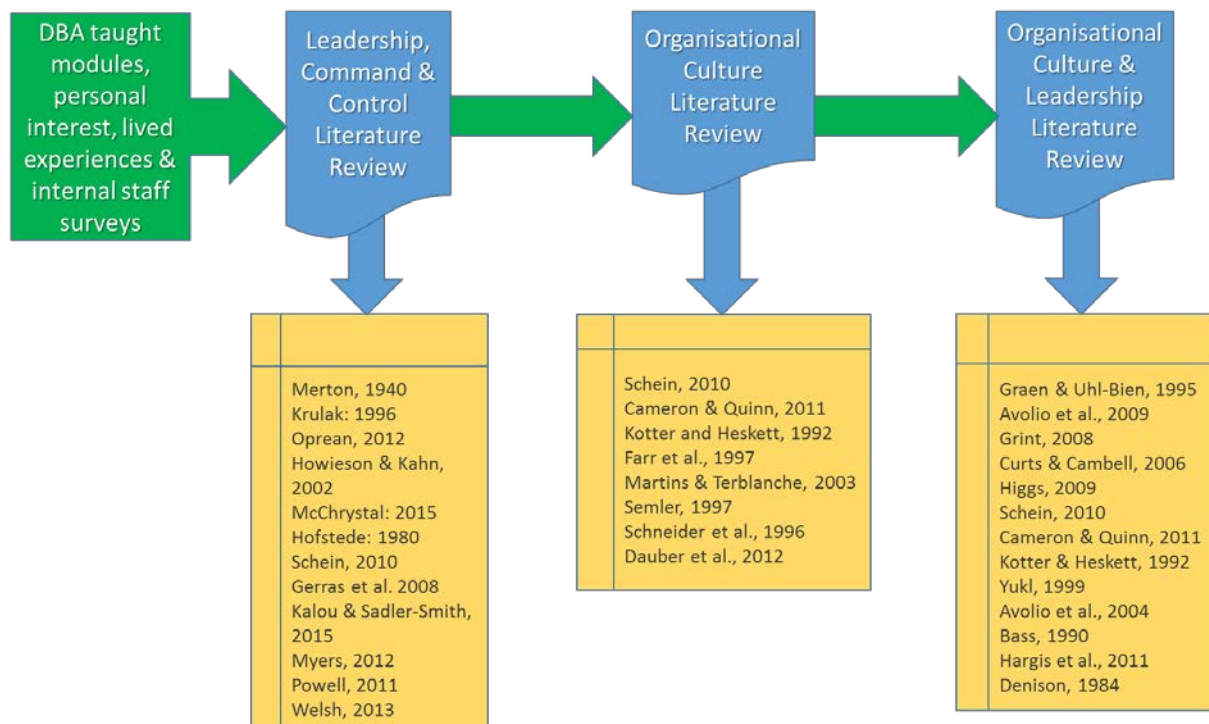


**Figure 13 – Phase 1 – Literature Conceptual Framework**

Phase 1 literature on leadership and culture led me to seek out an appropriate methodology; it was clear to me that I was delving into management research and that my research would be more appropriately facilitated through the use of qualitative methodologies (Denison, 1996; March, 2008; Jung et al., 2009; 1088). Methodologies that are interpretative (Lincoln, 2010) and informed through interviews and surveys (Tacchi et al.: 2003). Although the research

review conceptual framework appears to be logical and temporal in fact these literature topics are deeply interrelated; the literature revealed that many authors are of the opinion that culture and leadership are symbiotic, that they are indivisible and co-dependent (Schein, 2010; Cameron and Quinn, 2011; Kotter and Heskett, 1992). This resonated with my own experiences as I observed with fresh eyes how leaders led, set the tone for how others behaved, and how these behaviours became organisational norms that were imposed and sustained.

The literature indicated that organisational culture and leadership were not only critical success factors, but also that for a transformational organisation, certain cultural and leadership traits would be more evident than others. It provided evidence of organisations that were successful in becoming “transformational” usually had a certain organisational culture profile and were reinforced through specific leadership practices (Yukl, 1999; Avolio et al., 2004; Raelin, 2003). Through the process of Phase 1 literature review I drew upon the work of several key influencers, academics and writers as the process evolved:



**Figure 14 – Phase 1 – Literature Review Key Influencers**

As depicted in the conceptual flow shown in Figure 13, subsequently reinforced and discussed within the story in Chapter 5, my research was driven from a combination of personal interest in the topics, existing experiential evidence through organisational surveys, and the literature encompassing these areas of management research. The literature pertaining to leadership and organisational culture led me to believe that it should have been possible, through literature informed research, to leave my organisation in a sustainably better place than it was before the research (Coghlan and Brannick, 2010; Jackson and Parry, 2010). The literature provided me with an epistemological grounding (Patton, 2011; Duberley and Johnson, 2000) and awareness that action research is not only understanding organisations but is also deeply associated with organisational change (Argyris and Schön, 1989; McKay and Marshall, 2001; Reason, 2004; Coghlan and Brannick, 2010). It shaped profoundly the decisions taken and explained in Chapter 4 and provided me with an academically rigorous basepoint from which to start to plot an initial course of action, a course of action that ended up being challenged and then adapted significantly as the research evolved.

### **3.2 Informing the second AR cycle – “Mind The Gap”**

As I analysed the data from the interviews and observed with new insights my organisation, an interesting organisational phenomenon surfaced. A phenomenon that led me to perform an additional literature review that was directed from insights revealed as the organisation was studied, as the data was analysed, and this analysis contrasted with new literature in order to make sense of these emerging themes.

This second period of research and literature review provided me with the knowledge to develop meaningful interventions for my practice. The literature in Phase 2 then represents the second significant action research iteration and was initiated as the research from Phase 1 evolved. This journey is described in full in Chapter 5 – the story. As a reminder in Phase 1 read into Command and Control, Organisational Culture and Leadership.

Phase 2 literature was focussed on the following themes:

- Leadership “say/do” Gap
- Authentic Leadership
- Authentic Leadership Development



### 3.2.1 The “Say/Do” Gap: Espoused And In-Use Theories

What leaders say, articulate and communicate are sometimes described as “theories espoused” whereas “theories in use” are directly observable as interpretations of a leader’s behaviour, it is what leadership does (Argyris, 2010). As will be covered in detail within the story, many in my organisation are reporting significant gaps between what leaders are saying and what leaders are doing. I draw heavily on the work of academic researchers and particularly Argyris and Schön (1974) and Argyris (2010) in order to understand that the “say/do” gap is not something unique nor especially rare in organisations.

Gerras et al. (2008: 15) in their paper on US military organisation culture found there to be a sharp contrast “between an espoused goal to have an adaptive, learning environment” and “the corresponding culture and climate to enable this adaptation and learning”. There are clear benefits to reducing the gap; “when an organisation and its people do what they say they will do, this produces trust in the ranks” (Heskett, 2011: 136). There is one description of leadership that is claimed to be able to reduce the “say/do” gap to imperceptible dimensions and leaders who are able to lead in this way are therefore unlikely to exhibit major gaps between their espoused and in use theories. These types of leaders “do not show up as one person one day and another person the next.” (George et al., 2011: 175), they are consistent in their thoughts and deeds, fundamentally connected to who they are. These leaders are said to be authentic, they hold values to be true based upon their experiences confirming them as opposed to any social or political force demanding them to do so. In terms of closing the say-do gap, authentic leaders are those who base their actions on conviction and profoundly held values. “What they say is consistent with what they believe, and their actions are consistent with both their talk and their beliefs” (Ibid: 397). Some leaders exhibit clear transactional tendencies and others claim to perform transformational leadership but “authentic leaders” are said exhibit congruence in terms of living the behaviours that they express are important for the organisation, they observably and consistently walk the talk; an embodiment of Polonius’s cry of “To thine own self be true,” from Shakespeare’s Hamlet.

Authentic leadership theories started to be discussed around 15 years ago and since then the topic is said to have generated “considerable theoretical attention and continues to figure prominently in practitioners’ treatment of leadership” (Jackson and Parry: 2010, 116). Jackson and Parry (2010:117) claim that scholars of authentic leadership “define authenticity as having clear and certain knowledge about oneself in all regards” and that authentic leaders “behaving consistently with that self-knowledge” (Ibid.: 329).

### 3.2.2 What is Authentic Leadership?

Authenticity in a leader is said to come from a profound connection to “personal values and convictions” (Avolio et al., 2004: 806), authentic leaders exude openness and honesty, transparency and vulnerability, they are aware of their own limitations and accept feedback as an asset to growth and learning, they are accountable and congruent for what they say and what they do (Avolio et al., 2004). Gardner et al. (2005: 344) claim that authenticity is not only the process by which an individual owns their personal experiences, including thoughts, values, beliefs and emotions, but it also involves acting in congruence with those attributes. In other words, a profound and consistent alignment between what people think, what they say and, crucially, what they actually do. Avolio et al. (2004: 802) claims that authentic leaders know fundamentally who they are, understand what they value and believe and are known to act in accordance with their beliefs and values in dealings with others. Authentic leadership rests heavily on the “extent to which the leader’s self-concept is expressed in his or her behaviour” (Shamir and Eilam, 2005: 395), their “talk and actions are consistent” (Ibid: 397). Authentic leadership is said to have another helpful side effect, it is said to be highly effective at building “benevolence and integrity” in their followers (Avolio et al., 2004: 810) through engagement, openness and the casting of a believable shadow.

Avolio et al. (2009: 424) claim that of the many concepts associated with authentic leadership four factors appear to be crucial and can be recognised by the observation of:

- “Balanced processing” – the objective analysis and sense-making of relevant data.
- “Moral perspective” – being guided by values and beliefs that “self-regulate” behaviours.
- “Relational Transparency” – overt information sharing to include feelings.
- “Self-awareness” – an understanding of one’s skills, capabilities and weaknesses.

George and Sims (2007) offered five dimensions that mark out an authentic leader:

- “Purpose with Passion” – enthusiasm bereft of ego.
- “Practicing solid values” – living and being observed to live the values espoused.
- “Establishing connected relationships” – the ability to create and nurture “meaningful personal relationships”.
- “Demonstrated self-discipline” – the setting and achieving high standards for themselves.



- “Leading with heart” – daring enough to care, and to be seen to care.

Authentic leaders are fuelled by their deeply held values and beliefs and this enables them to align their behaviours with their talk. Avolio and Gardner (2005: 319) describe authentic leaders as those who “are ‘in tune’ with their basic nature and clearly and accurately see themselves and their lives.” Authentic leaders have managed to reduce, perhaps even eliminate altogether, the gap between espoused theories and in use theories. They “demonstrate transparent decision making, confidence, optimism, hope and resilience, and ***consistency between their words and their deeds***” (emboldened by the author, Avolio and Gardner, 2005: 326) “Their knowing is in their action” (SchÖn, 1992: 56) and their actions are observable and can be seen to be coherent.

### 3.2.3 Authentic Leadership Development

Jackson and Parry (2010: 21) summarise leadership development theories as beginning with trying to characterise personal qualities or “trait spotting” moving on to ‘style counselling’ theories characterizing certain leadership behavioural styles depending upon “task and relationship orientations”. Jackson and Parry (2010:25) remark that “trait approach seeks to determine the personal qualities and characteristics of leaders” implying a belief that leaders are born rather than made – in other words, nature is more important than nurture. This has more recently been challenged by Avolio et al. (2009: 425) who, during research on identical twins in Sweden claim the opposite to be true. Leadership can, in the right circumstances, be learned and not all great leaders were born with the “right” leadership abilities. Based upon a study of identical twins in Sweden, Avolio et al. (2009: 425) claim that most of a leader’s ability to lead is not genetically or hereditarily based at all, but are predominantly down to their experiences, their leadership history and that opens the prospect of developing leaders and developing leadership. Avolio et al. (Ibid) claim that up to 70% of a leader’s ability to lead comes from his or her story or “life context” with the remaining 30% being attributed to heritability.

Shotter (2010: 272) claims that “aspects of our utterances are clearly shaped by influences we have come to embody from our past experiences”. Jackson and Parry (2010:136) agree and claim that most leaders primarily learn leadership through experiences. Our leadership experiences therefore define who we are as leaders and that historical context informs what a leader believes and values about leading. Jung et al., (2009: 1092) citing Hofstede (2001) claim that our values are formed and integrated while we are young, practices on the other hand “are

acquired through socialisation at the workplace” and for many in the military, they have “worked” nowhere else. Their observable leadership practices, their “theories in use” (Argyris, 2010), as I explained in the literature review informing Part 1, are historically bound in their personal story, a personal story that is impacted by their national influences, service influences and their exposures to leadership moments throughout their career.

### *3.2.3.1 Life Stories and Leadership*

According to Jackson and Parry (2010: 69), our leadership experiences from the past deeply influence how we lead in the moment and in the future. “Individual life stories often define leadership” claims Denning (2007: 21). George et al., (2011: 164) makes the point that leadership emerges through “life stories” and development starts when leaders compare, reflect and reframe their life stories. Investigating life stories can provide “moments when it is possible for them to ‘regard a given case differently’” (Shotter, 2010: 272) to challenge introspectively our basic assumptions and beliefs. Gardner et al. (2005: 345) claim that authentic leadership is achieved through a process of self-awareness and self-acceptance. Authentic leadership starts with connecting with, relating to and understanding one’s life story (George et al., 2011).

Leadership then is not at all static but develops through life in even some of the most recognisable leaders. General Eisenhower illustrates this point through two quotes made at different times in his career from junior officer to the president of the USA.

**“Leadership is the art of getting someone else to do something you want done because he wants to do it.”**

Contrasted with this one much later in his career:

**“The supreme quality for leadership is unquestionably integrity. Without it, no real success is possible, no matter whether it is on a section gang, a football field, in an army, or in an office.”**

In the first quote claimed to have been uttered as a relatively young office leadership appears to be synonymous with manipulation, task focused, transactional – getting things done. Fast forward a number of military ranks and now serving as a very senior military officer it is less about task and more about being; he espouses leadership as being founded on integrity, a permanently available pointer to doing the right things. It does seem that it is easier to become more transformational the more senior you get and I will explore this in detail within the thesis.

To lead with integrity is synonymous with leading authentically, and as Sparrowe (2005: 419) states “authenticity serves as a moral compass by which the intentions of transformational leaders can be determined”. Following on from Argyris (2010) claim that our personal histories, our life stories, inform our behaviours then one’s leadership compass is influenceable as a consequence of reviewing, reflecting and resetting it to point towards the leadership we want to develop (George and Sims: 2007).

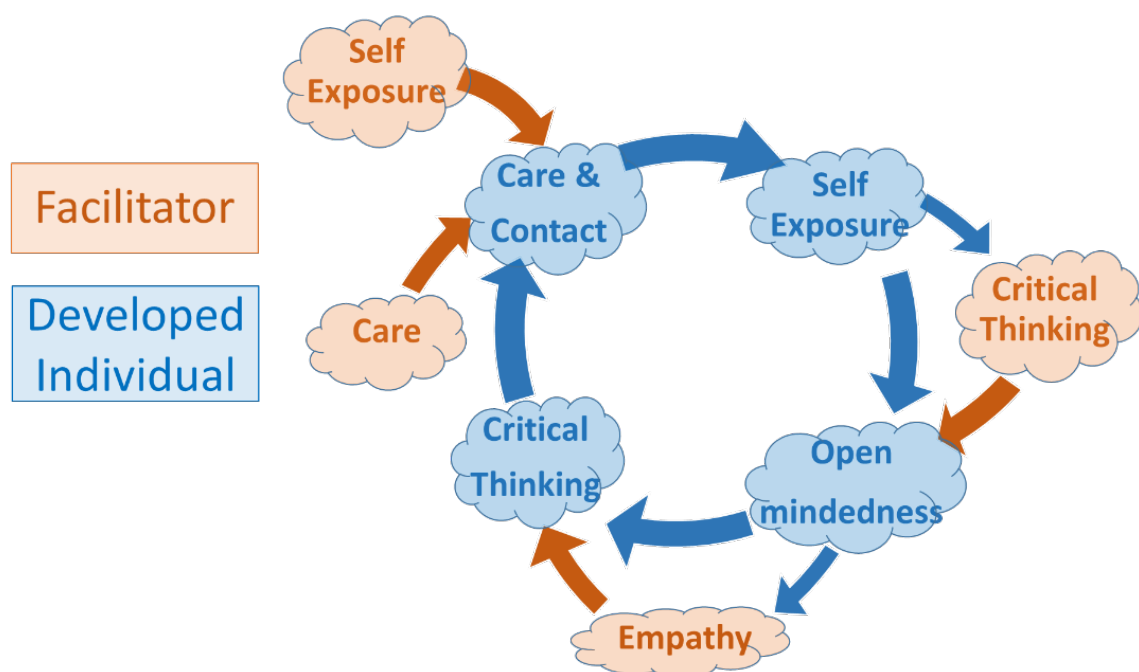
George and Sims (2007) suggest that authenticity in a leader is possible “When you are aligned with who you are, you find coherence between your life story and your leadership.” George et al. (2011: 165) purport that authentic leaders examine and frame their life stories, not as passive observers to events that unfolded, but instead see them as learning events that are still potentially rich with learning. Jackson and Parry (2010: 145) claim that becoming a better leader starts with reflection and during sessions they studied students were “encouraged to dig deep into their own history, investigating their own path as leader and follower”. Their engagement with others through exploration and discussion then “becomes the primary source of leadership learning”. Facilitating leaders to imagine and then articulate a future desired state from which to assess and compare where they are currently is potentially a “pattern breaking” activity (Nugus et al., 2012) that encourages the participants to reconnect, reassess and potentially revise strongly held personal beliefs. Schein (2010: 367) suggests that feedback is the key to learning, along with the associated reflection and assimilation of the feedback; feedback said to be more useful if it is asked for by the learner.

### *3.2.3.2 Authentic Leadership Development Conceptual Framework*

Allen and Roberts (2011: 67) describe leadership development as “a continuous, systemic process designed to expand the capacities and awareness of individuals, groups, and organisations in an effort to meet shared goals and objectives”. Creating the right developmental environment for senior mature leaders is not a trivial matter. In researching leadership development frameworks, I wanted to locate literature that would be contextually relevant for both my organisation and the leaders in it. Fiol and Lyles (1985: 811) define leadership learning in such a way that it dovetails into authentic leadership development, they state that learning is the “development of insights, knowledge, and associations between past actions, the effectiveness of those actions, and future actions.” Schein (2010:299). Wodak et al., (2009: 606) propose that authentic leaders are able to “promote a consistency of behaviour by creating links between their commitment to action and their organisational/professional/personal identities.”

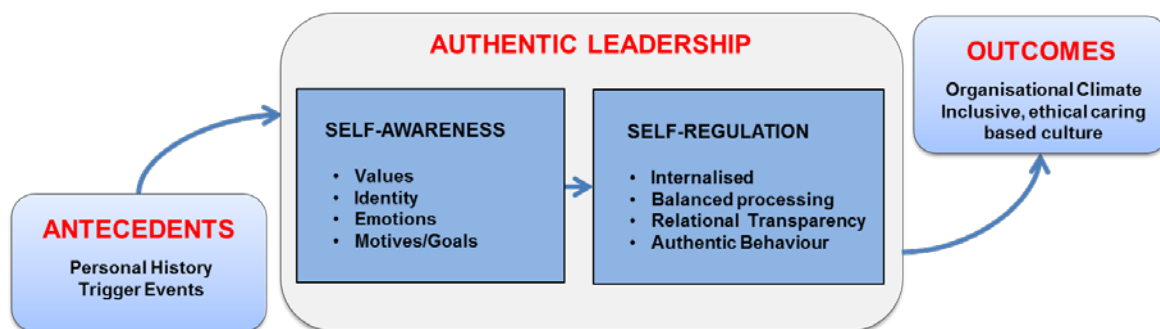
Argyris (1983) proposed a useful distinction between learning that reinforces previous learning and leaves the “underlying governing policies or values” intact, and learning that results in re-examining and changing these “underlying governing policies or values”. He calls the former learning context “single loop” learning and the latter “double loop” learning. He goes on to indicate that single loop learning is usually related to the “routine, immediate task” and double loop being associated to the “long range outcome”; an ability to deal with a specific issue compared with growing an ability to transfer this knowledge into other contexts.

Leadership is claimed to be a journey rather than a destination, a process rather than an outcome (George and Sims, 2007), a process influenced and informed by previous leadership enactment. Berkovich (2014: 255) proposes eight components that are critical to authentic leadership development as “self-exposure, open-mindedness, empathy, care, respect, critical thinking, contact and mutuality”. I used this model (Figure 15) to guide my thinking and behaviour when trying to facilitate the interventions and learning of these senior leaders in my organisation. I remained conscious to support the individual development as depicted by the blue route by ensuring I was operating from a mindset shown by the orange route.



**Figure 15 - Dialogical Pedagogy in Dyadic Interaction (Berkovich, 2014).**

Leadership development then is a lot about mindsets and creating the conditions for reflection. In order to move from creating the conditions for thinking, to guiding the things leaders were thinking about. Gardner et al. (2005) introduce a conceptual authentic leadership development process as shown below in Figure 16. This was used to help me create a guided leadership development experience for the senior leaders and through Chapter 5, the story, I will describe how the process evolved from conceptual modelling to practical intervention.



A conceptual framework for authentic leader development adapted from Gardner et al., (2005: 346)

**Figure 16 - Authentic Leadership Development Process**

### 3.2.3.3 Antecedents

In terms of an authentic leadership developmental process, many theorists believe that the starting point should be their own history. A leader's personal history and the trigger events that occurred can be considered to be the leader's story, and all leaders have a story. Introspective reflection into that story has the potential to create a "concordance with respect to core values, identity, emotions, motives and goals" (Jackson and Parry, 2010: 145). It comes from individuals directing their consciousness to self and by learning or confirming "who they are and what they value, authentic leaders build understanding and a sense of self that provides a firm anchor for their decisions and actions" (Gardner et al., 2005: 347).

Gardner et al. refer to this starting point as an antecedent, an activity that logically and influentially precedes another. Gardner et al. (2005: 347) consider that the leader's trigger events and personal history as necessary precursors for authentic leader development. According to Avolio et al., (2009: 426) "trigger events induce self-focussed attention, self-assessment, and activate a leader's working self-concept", their "theories espoused" (Argyris, 1995; 2010; Raelin, 1994) by another name. Some believe that these trigger moments can be

future paced and as such enable a leader to develop new responses within a simulated environment (Avolio et al., (2009: 426).

#### *3.2.3.4 Self-Awareness Stage*

Achieving “authenticity” involves leaders being committed to “self-awareness” and “self-acceptance” (Gardner et al., 2005: 345). Avolio and Gardner (2005: 317) point out that authenticity starts with a profound understanding of self and “self-awareness occurs when individuals are cognizant of their own existence”. Self-awareness comes from a personal understanding of their “unique talents, strengths, sense of purpose, core values, beliefs and desires.” (Ibid: 324). They go on to offer that becoming self-aware is a continuous process and not a destination point. Orem et al., (2007: 41) propose that an awareness of our past is critical for our transition into the future when they state that “a person’s self-awareness and destiny are interwoven”.

Self-awareness enables developing leaders to become and remain aware of their own patterns of thinking. According to Manasse (1985) leaders who think about how they lead, to reflect and be ready to be open about that reflection are set apart from those who do not. This setting apart according to Manasse appears to come from an ability to communicate what is important to them, and before you can communicate that you need to understand it and be profoundly connected to a sense of self. Locating and truly owning self, locating “one’s voice and aligning behaviour with one’s values engenders credibility in the eyes of the followers” (Sparrowe, 2005). Gardner et al. (2005: 344) in their research focussed on leaders (and followers) experiencing growth through becoming increasingly authentic; “authenticity involves both owning one’s personal experiences (value, thoughts, emotions and beliefs) and acting in accordance with one’s true self (expressing what you really think and believe and behaving accordingly).

A leader’s thinking then becomes so important in terms of informing their behaviours. Thinking about their thinking becomes a potential catalyst for personal awareness and change. Change in a human system is said to begin with a loosening of the grip of earlier formed values and beliefs, what Lewin (1947) describes organisational settings as an “unfreezing” process before moving through organisational change and refreezing. A precondition for any lasting change then is the “unfreezing” (Lewin, 1947) process on which any serious organisational change process must be based. However, before organisations can change, the people in them have to develop and change (Schneider et al., 1996), and senior leader and manager

development are more effective when reflection and critical reflexivity are component parts (Cunliffe, 2004).

Berkovich (2014: 249) believes that self-narrative authentic discovery has less potential to develop individuals than methods that facilitate dialogically intersubjective narratives. The latter being more effective at breaking previously “complacent or ritualistic” thinking so as to “transform old ways of theorizing and managing” (Cunliffe, 2004: 408). Cadle et al. (2004) indicate that help in becoming self-aware and ready to change can be enabled by the engagement of others; “Part of the unfreezing stage could be setting up an investigation to collate data that could be fed back to people to show the importance of a change.” Cadle et al. (2004)

### *3.2.3.5 Self-Regulation Stage*

Self-regulation is the process that enables leaders to become consonant so that words and deeds are coherent. Sparrowe (2005) suggests that self-awareness does not have to be only down to “self” and offers (citing Luthans and Avolio, 2003: 248) that “self-awareness and self-regulation” require input from others, that “true self is not discovered absent of others but is constituted in relation to others”. Self-regulation creates an opportunity for leaders to separate themselves briefly from reality and think deeply about that reality from a distance, to take a meta-position observing self and context as though for the first time (Cunliffe, 2004). Chen (2008: 551) reinforces this historical linkage when he states that “Patterns and interconnections are identified from descriptions of communicative acts and activities examined after the fact, which relies heavily, though not exclusively on history getting the answer”.

Having someone else look with you into your reflection in the mirror not only improves self-awareness but also impacts “relational transparency” (Avolio and Gardner, 2005: 326). Susman and Evered (1978:593) describe the emergent properties of interventions like these as “acts of communications between two or more self-reflecting subjects” and this is a critical phase of the “authentic leadership” component of the development cycle shown on Figure 15. It is during this stage that new ways of conceptualisation and reflection can occur (Ibid).

The latest Sandhurst guide to young officer starting their journey to senior leader positions warns them that “No leader is ever quite as good as they might be.” (UK MOD, 2014: 3) and looking back at the self-awareness phase perhaps fewer are as good as they think they are. The self-regulation phase offers a potential narrative route to address this. Preparing new leaders to



be ready for self-reflection and regulation is a “continual process that requires humility and a willingness to recognise mistakes and take remedial action” (Ibid).

Berkovich (2014: 248) claims that authentic narratives can be the outcome of a “structured interaction with others”. He goes on to offer that the “relational aspect is essential for developing authentic leadership”; although reflection and study of self may be only part of a more comprehensive process. Enabling an environment where leaders can explore their own leadership story and re-reveal their formative experiences might offer a venue for not only looking in the mirror, but also having that reflection witnessed, even commented upon by their peers. Self-regulation then is the process that enables leaders to become consonant so that words and deeds are coherent. Locating and truly owning oneself, locating “one’s voice and aligning behaviour with one’s values engenders credibility in the eyes of the followers” (Sparrowe, 2005).

#### *3.2.3.6 Outcome Stage*

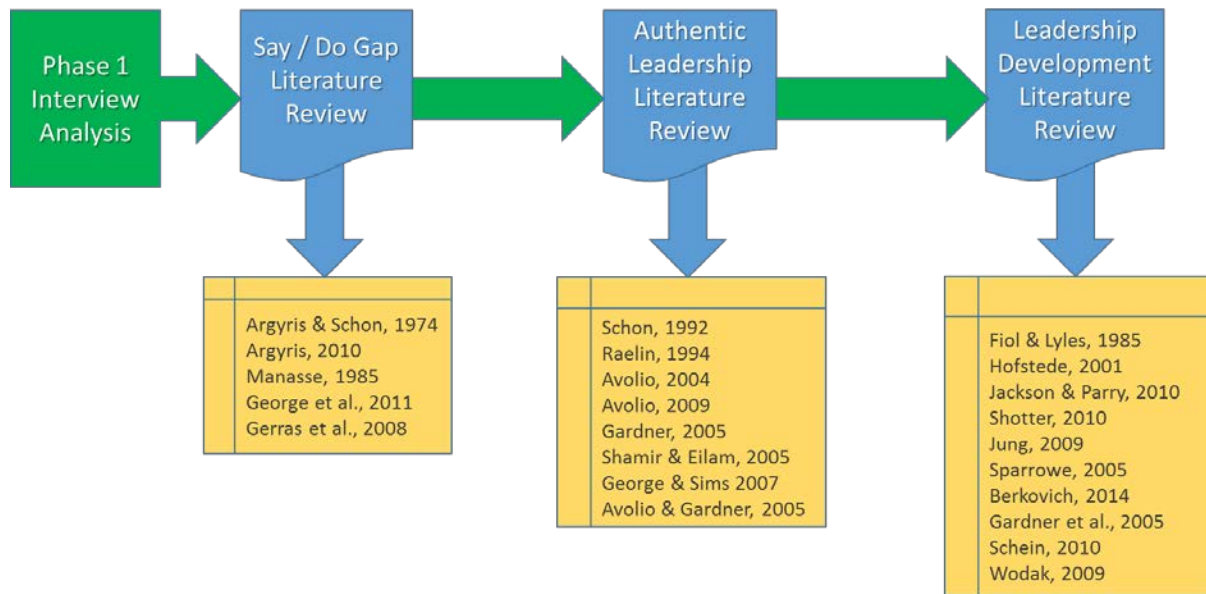
Constructive leadership development as described by McCauley et al., (2006: 635) is concerned with a leader’s personal “construals, constructions and interpretations” of experience. Reconnecting and reassessing those previous experiences in light of a new wholly unique context offers new possibilities and choices of response and repertoires for leaders. Susman and Evered (1978) claim that it is the shared deconstruction of previous experiences and re-examining them, redefining them and future pacing them is development in action. They claim that “Knowledge is gained dialectically by proceeding from the whole to its parts and then back again. Each time an incongruence occurs between the part and the whole, a reconceptualization takes place” (McCauley et al., 2006: 595). As McCauley et al., (Ibid: 636) point out, once a new “order of development has been constructed, the previous order loses its organizing function, but remains as a perspective that can now be reflected upon”. It is no longer buried in our unconscious patterns of thinking and behaviour, but, through a process of revealing, evaluating and realigning new options, creating new outcomes, these patterns becoming apparent and ready to reassess. Making these internal programs overt and highlighting the mismatches that are said to reinforce defensive routines and limit organisational growth, releases people from being “unaware of the mismatch, and involved denial, cover-up and refusal to talk about the denial and cover-up.” (Anderson et al, 2015: 82).



### 3.2.4 Phase 2 Literature Summary

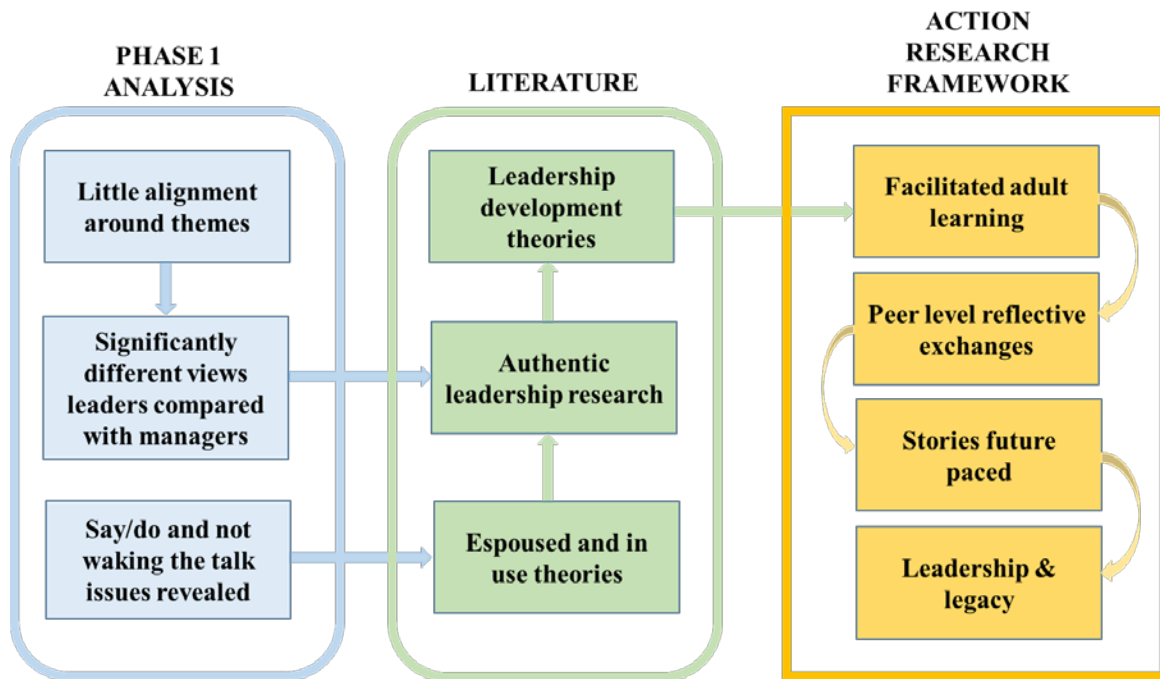
The literature in Phase 2 was driven by the revelations, analysis and reflection following the direction and methods influenced directly by the literature exposed during the Phase 1 review. The analysis of the results generated in Phase 1 clearly revealed that there was little in terms of alignment between how the managers reported experiencing the organisation, compared with how the leaders reported experiencing the organisation. The lack of organisational alignment around the themes that the literature in Phase 1 indicated would be evident, stopped me in my tracks and prompted me to ask myself what was really going on in my organisation. Consequently the Phase 2 literature review started with my desire to understand authenticity and authentic leadership since the organisational and leadership themes predicted to be important were just not evident in the disclosures and analysis. The Phase 2 literature was focussed upon discovering whether the situation being described; namely the rather different view of leadership from those separated by just one managerial layer, was something that academics had studied before; whether there were academically sound precedents that I could build upon, not only to better appreciate the phenomenon but also influence and position the next phase of the research alongside the literature.

The Phase 2 literature review was also based the discovery of a phenomenon commonly reported, that leaders were not “walking the talk” and I needed to understand whether this too could be explained by reviewing existing research literature. The review in this phase provided me with a new appreciation of the phenomenon of an evident “say-do” gap and led me to return into the domain of the early research into these areas (Argyris and Schön, 1974; Manasse, 1985) through to more recent publications in this area (Argyris, 2010; George et al., 2011; Gerras et al., 2008). The key academic influencers for the Phase 2 literature review are shown below in Figure 17:



**Figure 17 – Phase 2 – Literature Review Key Influencers**

The literature review performed Phase 2 revealed a gradual shift in what many academic scholars were researching and reporting on the subject of contemporary leadership, reinforcing this through the use of various case studies (Gardner et al., 2005; George and Sims, 2007 and Örténblad et al., 2016). The literature review confirmed that organisations were becoming increasingly interested in and in some cases dependent upon the existence of authentic leadership (Raelin, 2003; Avolio, 2004) and much less dependent, or defined by, the presence of certain themes or traits (Huczynski, 1993; Yukl, 1999). It provided me with an academic thread that connected the say/do with a possible solution supported by academia; that of authenticity and the benefits of truly authentic leadership. The Phase 2 review also enabled me to create an authentic leadership development framework and how the literature informed my direction and focus is conceptualised in the flow diagram that appears as Figure 18 below:



**Figure 18 – Phase 2 – Literature Conceptual Framework**

Good theories are said to be highly practical and are said to begin with practice in mind (Van de Ven, 1989; Semler, 1997). Indeed action research is primed to deliver “actionable” theories (Coghlan, 2007: 298) but getting from a theory of action to something “actionable” and on to “actioned” is not trivial. In the later stages of my literature review I delved into the literature to investigate how I might be able to create something practical, experiential, memorable; something that would fulfil the requirements to be considered to be “double loop” (Argyris, 1983) and “mode 2” learning (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008; Huff and Huff, 2001), learning that goes beyond contributing to current knowledge for a specific gap but rather paves the way for wider learning, learning that could leave a legacy. “Knowing” authenticity in leadership is important is one thing, being able to facilitate the development of that in others, within my context, is another. The last part of the literature reviewed during Phase 2 provided me with the knowledge baseline from where to migrate into contextual theory building on authentic leadership development. The literature offered views into how leadership might emerge in individuals (Rost, 1993; Clifton, 2012), where it comes from and how it evolves. The literature on authentic leadership development (Avolio et al., 2004; Gardner et al., 2005; Shamir and Eilam, 2005; Avolio et al., 2009) provided me with a rich source of evidence and methodologies for designing a contextually appropriate intervention. It provided me with

insights, knowledge and then processes that I needed to develop contextually relevant interventions that would create the possibility for authentic leadership to emerge (George and Sims, 2007; Berkovich, 2014; McCauley et al., 2006; Susman and Evered; 1978). These contextually relevant action research interventions are fully disclosed within Chapter 5 – the Story.

## Chapter 4 - METHODOLOGY and METHOD of INQUIRY

Within this Chapter I describe how I investigated the areas of interest and the methodologies adopted. It attempts to justify the methods based upon the context and research themes and shows how the research methodology was selected and performed. It reveals the ethical and political influences under which the research was performed and sets the scene for the iterations and change of direction the research took. It also describes my approach to research quality and how this approach was maintained throughout the research period whilst trying to ensure that relevance and pragmatism were not lost in the application of the methodology. Specifically, within the setting of an organisational development initiative, the methodology and methods are utilised to examine the declared experiences of the people occupying the most senior layer of the organisation (known as the “Command Group”) with the people occupying the organisational layer directly beneath them (known as the “Branch Heads”). The research was intentionally performed as the organisation went through an organisational culture awareness programme in order to identify and make sense of any changes in leadership that occurred.

### 4.1 Methodology

The research envelope that my study of leadership and culture was performed within can be characterised as “management research” (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008) which is a stream of research that appears to have become increasingly important and relevant of late. In the early 90’s Astley and Zammuto (1992: 443) indicated that management researchers were producing findings that had limited significance for business practices and held little value for business executives; the findings or the presentation of the findings appeared to lack relevance or transferability and failed to create sufficient interest from practice (Bartunek et al., 2006). By 2010 however, researchers of management are said to have generated a “virtual tsunami of important critical work” (Lincoln, 2010: 4) and the growing appetite for learning in this area continues to drive researchers and also fill the shelves of management and leadership sections in bookshops and magazine stores (Ibid). I tried to remain true to contributing to the critical work that does exist and to satisfy somewhat my own appetite for learning in this area by the application of my methodology and methods.

It is said that one of the most effective ways of developing insights and awareness of organisational systems is through a process of trying to change it (Coghlan and Brannick, 2010; Anderson et al, 2015: 168) and this consideration remained a key feature of the research.

Research credibility is enhanced through a rigorous approach and Creswell (2007) offers a process model that identifies distinct phases as “determining the specific research question, determining the outcome and then selecting the appropriate research methodology”. Jackson and Parry (2010:135) claim that it is possible, and in some cases desirable, to blend research with organisational learning claiming that “Some of the more astute leadership researchers have attempted to exploit potential synergies between research and development activities.” This duality was also something that I remained cognizant of and factored into the development of my qualitative methodology and methods.

#### 4.1.1 Qualitative Research

March (2008: 4) states that although organisational researchers are able employ the full array of “quantitative and statistical tools of social science” his position is that qualitative research is more appropriate, indicating that many important studies are ethnographic in nature. Jung et al., (2009; 1088) offer that the most appropriate methods for researching organisational culture and leadership are qualitative in nature. Qualitative researchers lean towards the phenomenological, they are often “interpretivist” (Lincoln, 2010: 8) and are advised to go about their research sense making reflexively. Qualitative researchers are often required to be involved with the subjects of their study and one branch of qualitative research, action research, goes yet further by “using managers themselves as collaborators and sharing the collection and analysis of data to ensure the implementation of findings.” (Thorpe and Holt, 2008: 4). Easterby-Smith et al., (2008: 9) describe this type of research as “mode 2” research where knowledge is produced “through direct engagement with social practice and problems.”

#### 4.1.2 Constructivism

Organisational research is “fuzzy” (Anderson et al., 2005) and Holman and Thorpe (2003) claim that “management and the way managers work and learn with others is best explained by a relationally responsive version of social constructivism”. Social constructivists consider “the person as actively engaged in the creation of their own phenomenal world” in other words, everyone perceives their world uniquely and derives their reality accordingly (Burr, 2003: 19). Constructivism leads to researchers exploring how research participants experience the world

anticipating that “there are ‘truths’ rather than one truth” where social realities are profoundly individual, emergent and relative (Cunliffe, 2011: 656).

#### 4.1.3 Interpretivism

Gioia and Chittipeddi (1991: 447) offer that an “interpretive perspective and ethnographic approach” can generate “activities that are simultaneously symbolic and substantive, involve reciprocal processes of cognition and action, and entail cycles of understanding and influence”. Theories based upon interpretivism are said to be “fat with the juice of human endeavour, human decision making, *zaftig* with human contradiction, human emotion, human frailty” (Lincoln, 2010: 6). Interpretivism is a research leaning that prioritises and integrates the subjective experiences of people into the research context and requires researchers to interpret elements of the study, thus interpretivism integrates human interest into a study. Research carried out in this way may not be able to be generalised given the approach’s subjective nature, and no organisation is the same, however, making collective sense of multiple individual perspectives requires interpretation and interpretivism has academic support as a methodology. It is acknowledged that “interpretivist qualitative research” has much more than purely anecdotal value (Wainwright and Waring, 2008) so long that the interview data is codified based upon “the theoretical position of the research” (Ibid:86.). Bell and Thorpe (2013: 62) warn that interpretivist researchers need to be ready and able to “cope with uncertainty and take calculated risks”; that they are prepared to generate theory through cyclical and iterative processes whilst being prepared for “a change of direction as the research progresses”.

#### 4.1.4 Axiology

Qualitative researchers are advised to make it clearly evident what the researcher values and believes in regarding the research (Ponterotto and Grieger; 2007). In terms of my research my values and beliefs, driven from my own personal biases, are made evident in Chapters 1, 2, 5 and 6. My own values and beliefs effectively shape my ability to notice, interpret and make sense of organisational life. It is important to remember that the researcher’s “accounts of their reality are themselves constructions of reality and not reality itself” (Mercer 2007: 12 citing Anderson and Jones, 2000: 44). The values and beliefs of those researched are also paramount, rich with information to be able to better understand organisational phenomena. Conger et al. (2000:761) indicate that a researcher’s sensitivity to both the environment and the people in that environment has a reciprocitous quality (Bradford and Cohen, 1989; Gouldner, 1960). Reciprocity as an acknowledgement and acceptance of the research based upon a “genuine understanding by both parties of the value each has the potential to offer the other”

(Antonacopoulou, 2010: 220). In relation to personal drivers, Schön (1992: 53) reminds us that when a researcher determines an area of research he “decides what he will attend to and what he will ignore”, thereby already setting the course for the “direction for action.”. That direction of action will inevitably lead to impacting the lives of others somehow as well as that of the researcher. Shifting from “looking in on” to “being part of” (Anderson et al., 2015) contrasts methods posing “researchers as objective and neutral” and rather treat consequences of research not as “bias or unintended effects” (Luscher and Lewis, 2008: 238) but as planned, and being meaningful and purposeful.

#### 4.1.5 Research Alignment

The table below developed from Ponterotto and Grieger (2007: 410) outlines the decisions I took about the research and shows how they dovetail into a credible approach and methodology.

<b>Consideration</b>	<b>Explanation</b>	<b>Composition</b>
<b>Approach</b>	Type of research from a researcher and a researched standpoint.	Constructivist and interpretivist approach enabled through an ethnography.
<b>Ontology</b>	What do I believe about knowledge as it exists?	Multiple, equally valid, socially constructed realities. That many unique realities coexist together.
<b>Epistemology</b>	What do I believe about knowledge as it is created?	Interactive researcher-participant development roles: potency of interaction uncovers deeper meaning and insight. That is co-created and dynamic.
<b>Axiology</b>	What the researcher believes about the research?	Researcher interested in biases, views them as inevitable and worthy of exploration. Believes that the organisation and I can learn from the research.
<b>Rhetorical Structure</b>	How is this type of research most	Description in the first person, relaying and relying “extensively on participant voices”.



	appropriately written up?	Prose tends to be emotive; subjective and that there are stories within stories.
<b>Method</b>	How will my research be performed?	Qualitative, naturalistic, deeply interactive and collaborative. Reveals meaning through discussions, words and text.

**Table 4 – Research Alignment**

#### 4.1.6 Ethnography

One qualitative methodology stood out for me as I reflected upon how leaders lead within our organisation’s culture, and that was the qualitative research methodology described as ethnography. Ethnography literally translates to “write or represent a culture” (Tacchi et al., 2003: 9). The methodology has, at its core, the research and investigation into a “culture sharing group” (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008:78) and so it is an appropriate match for the research question. Jung et al., (2009) suggest that data creation methodologies for researching organisations includes “comparatively unstructured and emergent ethnographic approaches” and my research commenced from this perspective.

Ethnography is a form of social research that features exploration on the nature of social phenomena, it works predominantly with unstructured data and “involves explicit interpretation of the meanings and functions of human actions, the product of which mainly takes the form of verbal descriptions and explanations” (Atkinson and Hammersley, 1994). Gioia and Chittipeddi (1991: 435) consider ethnographic research as immersive and interactive and indicate that “interactions and experiences” constitute data that can be examined both from within and outside of the context. According to Jarolmack and Khan (2014: 237) ethnographers analyse and interpret data “in relation to observations of actors’ situated behaviour across a variety of social settings”.

Some believe that ethnography falls under the broad umbrella of action research (Coghlan and Brannick, 2010; Pedler, 2008), this covers a broad spectrum of research methodologies that have “pragmatism” as a core attribute (Eikeland, 2007) and “explicitly include both a problem-solving interest cycle and a research interest cycle” (McKay and Marshall, 2001). Action research’s authenticity and credibility are wrapped up in utility and pluralism claim Greenwood and Levin (2007: 63) that offers an appropriate coupling to an “insider’s” ability to flow across

functional boundaries and operate at multiple layers in the organisation in order to improve some organisational phenomena. Ethnography is also a research method that emphasises the “co-creation of meaning” (Anderson et al., 2005:6) that was a critical axiological factor for me in terms of lasting organisational development.

#### 4.1.7 Ethnography And Its Relation With Action Research

In a UNESCO funded research initiative Tacchi et al., (2003) found that combining ethnography and action research was useful in that they used “ethnography to drive the research process” and “action research to link the research process back the project’s plans and activities” (Ibid: 1). Bath (2009: 214) proposes that instead of trying to avoid slipping unintentionally from ethnography into something more interventionist that instead, one does so intentionally, thereby characterising “the methodology of an entire project as having an ‘ethnographic action research’ methodology”. Jarolmack and Khan (2014) for example claim that careful ethnographers realise that the interview is part of the action that unfolds. They recognise the value of “ethnographic interviews”, not just as a form of data gathering, but also as being part of the action that is potentially embedded within an organisational context.

Oquist (1978: 145) highlights the potential synergies available to researchers of practice when he describes how knowledge uncovered through the research process guides the “reality” of practice and how perceptions of “reality” are open for modification as a consequence. It is within action research, claims Oquist (Ibid.), that “knowledge is produced and reality modified simultaneously; each occurring due to the other.”. Bath (2009: 213) claims “the starting and finishing points for the action in an action research project become muddled and inevitably tied to the planning and evaluation stages” and she suggests that an “elision” between ethnography and action research exists.

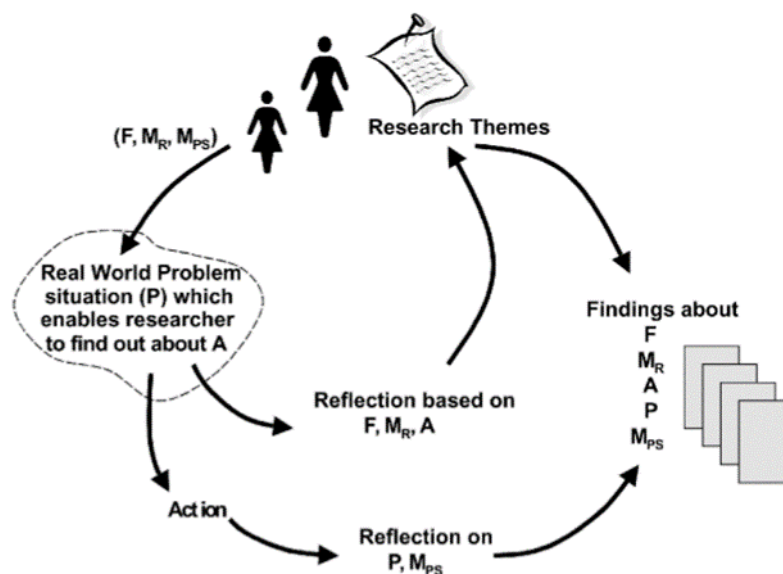
#### 4.1.8 Action Research

Action research is said to start with a desire to investigate “what we don’t know” in an attempt to “find out what we don’t know” (Coghlan and Brannick, 2010: 141), a sustained emergent inquiry driven by what is investigated, revealed and illuminated and striven to be understood through research. Brannick and Coghlan, (2010: 4) describe the broad characteristics of action research as being; “research in action, rather than research about action, a collaborative democratic partnership, research concurrent with action, a sequence of events and an approach to problem-solving.” Action research takes place within executives’ natural work settings and has the potential to develop “self-help competencies in organisational members” (Coghlan,

2007: 294). “Excellent action research” has a central “emergent development form” where practical issues exposed democratically through intimate knowledge of the practice are researched in order to pursue “worthwhile purposes” (Reason, 2004: 270).

Coghlan and Brannick, (2010: 6) claim that action researchers embrace the “epistemological assumption that the purpose of academic research and discourse is not only to describe, understand and explain the world but also to change it.” Action research also encourages the researcher to see themselves “as part of the problem that they wanted to resolve” (Pedler, 2008: 46). It is cyclical, iterative and reflective, blending seamlessly periods of action, interpretation and analysis all informed by rigorous research. Quality in action research revolves around a clear demonstration of the enactment of cyclical transitions through research, reflection and action; reflection and action within a collaborative setting employing multiple data sources with the aim of creating the potential for co-generated insight, awareness and knowledge to emerge.

McKay and Marshall (2001) offer a process model that shows how the real-world problems are researched and reflected upon in an interactive cyclical way.



**Figure 19 - Action Research Process Model from McKay and Marshall (2001).**

Where P = real word problem or area of investigation, M<sub>R</sub> = action research, M<sub>PS</sub> = options and outcomes, A = issues and challenges associated with researching within the organisation and F = theoretical framework. When described in this way the two cycles (imperatives) are shown; “one cycle representing and focused on the problem-solving interest in AR, and the other cycle representing and focused upon the research interest in AR.” (McKay and Marshall, 2001:57). I understand this as a model that advises reflection that is focussed on the current knowledge and how it relates to the research and the issues associated with it to then relook and/or revise the research themes, and at the same time a reflective cycle focused upon the actual problem and the potential outcomes all iterating through to come together to create the findings. Chapter 5 will show I followed this process model and my themes were revised and new ones were located that revealed new findings.

Insider action research shifts seamlessly through iterative periods of organisational intimacy where the researcher is engaged in the problem through to periods of reflexive “witness-thinking” (Shotter 2006), where the researcher is with the problem, and periods of detached academic analysis, where the problem is observable from a detached perspective. This flow can shift in the moment as the researcher and researched create new connections from emergent discoveries available if we “allow ourselves to be spontaneously responsive to the temporal unfolding of their expressive movements” (Ibid: 588). It is research which emphasises “meta-competence over competence” where the ability to learn and adapt to situations beyond the one(s) currently presenting themselves (Anderson et al: 2015, 68).

Friedman and Rogers (2009: 32) state that action research represents an appreciation and understanding of the world as the participants do, and the potential to create new realities. They also offer insights into what “good” action theory is comprised of (Ibid: 35-37) and using these and integrating additional important features and core characteristics from Greenwood and Lewin (2007), I created a research “checklist” that I used regularly to confirm that I was staying true to a credible action research process.

- It is bound in real life context (Greenwood and Levin, 2007)
- It is cognizant of, and sensitive to, the “meaning making” of the participants (Friedman and Rogers, 2009)
- It takes participants inputs seriously through a process of collaborative communication. (Greenwood and Levin, 2007)

- It challenges “tacit processes, unconscious motivations and unawareness of unintended consequences “and creates, through inquiry, new previously hidden or unknown concepts” (Friedman and Rogers, 2009)
- Its credibility and validity are judged upon workability and emancipation of participants (Greenwood and Levin, 2007)
- It enables reframing, reinterpretations and resetting of core thinking strategies providing a framework for “disconfirmability” (Friedman and Rogers, 2009:37) and placing the responsibility for causal effects at the feet of the participants.

#### 4.1.9 Voices Against Action Research

Action research is not unilaterally accepted as a research paradigm as disputes over its validity remain and although it may no longer deserve the branding of being “highly controversial” (Oquist, 1978: 143); it is nonetheless open to be contested and especially in the area of methodology. McKay and Marshall (2001) for example make the point that there are “comparatively few guidelines” describing how to put action research into practice, as they say, “how to do” action research (Ibid: 49). Frankham and Howes (2007: 628) warn that action research has no “blueprint” and consequently it is difficult to determine where a research project will go given the unpredictability of the “unfolding action as a joint production”. Argyris and Schön (1989: 612) lay out the challenge laid at the action researcher’s feet as a balance between “appropriate rigour without sacrificing relevance”. Whilst concerns over the efficacy of action research remain in some quarters the outcomes generated through the action research process are said to have significant potential. Action research represents an appreciation and understanding of the world as the participants see it, and some writers claim that theories emerging from action research are “subordinate to practical outcomes” (Friedman and Rogers, 2009: 32) whereas others suggest that it is the theories that not only influence but also can determine outcomes (Van de Ven, 1989).

#### 4.2 Ethical Considerations

In this part of the thesis I describe the ethical approval process through the University of Liverpool’s committee on research ethics. This process was sponsored by my thesis supervisor Dr Lisa Anderson. The process was started upon completion of my application for approval of a project involving human participants, human data or human material that was dated 13<sup>th</sup> July 2013. Approval to proceed with my research “An ethnographical analysis on the impact on the

interactions of senior leaders within a military HQ as they/we progress through a major organisational culture alignment process.” was received on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2013.

Prior to my completion of the ethical approval process I needed to be sure that I would have the support of my own organisation and in a military organisation that starts very much at the top. I wrote requesting permission to study my organisation from the JWC Commander through the Chief of Staff and needed to repeat this twice as the Commander rotated out of the JWC. Once permission was given I then needed to ensure that all participants were considered. Each of the participants completed a consent form for participation in the research as well as participant information sheet (Appendix E) that was sent as a read ahead package, additionally I reiterated the information at the beginning of each of the interviews.

The information sheet explained the purpose of the research, why they had been asked to participate, explained their “opt out” and that this option that could be initiated at any stage of the process. The sheet also explained how I would share and report on any findings, the confidentiality agreements and storage and eventual deletion of any data generated and that they were invited to contact my supervisor, at any time, if they had any additional concerns. Interviewing is a valid ethnographic process (Jarolmack and Khan, 2014: 237) but great care should be taken to ensure that the story is not unduly influenced in some way by the interviewer. I acknowledged and tried to prevent myself being “selectively inattentive to data incongruent with their theories” (Schön, 1992: 55) but am not able to assure myself I was successful. Frankham and Howes (2007) warn that attempts to “present other people’s understandings creates them as deficient and therefore should be avoided”; in effect, I found it unavoidable.

Apart from the clear need to attain a formal ethical approval from the University it is also incumbent on the researcher to stay within the boundaries of that approval process throughout the research period and beyond. It is said that it is within action research that “politics and ethics combine” (Nugus et al., 2012: 1947). An insider researcher, especially one operating as a “complete member” (Coghlan and Brannick, 2010), is in a negotiated privileged position that requires careful, sensitive handling. It comes with some risk (Mercer, 2007) and a significant ethical responsibility falls upon the shoulders of the researcher to reduce the risk that neither the research process nor the research outcomes, create harm to those involved. I prepared the information sheet with sufficient lack of detail in terms of what outcomes I was expecting to leave the participants freedom to manoeuvre, cognizant of Mercer’s (2007: 11) advice that

researchers should “avoid ‘contaminating’ their study by revealing too much about the expectations”.

I also tried to maintain a level of objectivity regarding my own relationships with those who participated and in Appendix C, the Consolidated and Aggregated Interview Results, I felt that some of the participants had some sort of respect for what I was trying to achieve, their responses were more supportive and encouraging than others. Equally a vocal minority were not so supportive and wanted to highlight that it had been a somewhat foolhardy venture. I made a note of the relationship as experienced during the interview and also as I knew them to be, aware that an action researcher enjoys a fluid relationship with the researched (Mercer, 2007). Coghlan (2007: 297) states that “friendship and research ties can vary in character from openness to restrictiveness” creating a risk of influencing the data in one way or another, a risk I feel is unavoidable but has to be recognised and made clear. Tacchi et al. (2003: 28) indicates that “people are normally willing to talk about themselves, their work and their life, with reasonable openness and honesty, provided that they perceive the researcher’s sincerity of interest, feel that they understand the researcher’s agenda, and trust the researcher’s statements on confidentiality” (Walsham, 2006: 323). As Argyris (1995: 115) identifies, researchers may make the claims that their research methods are neutral; “this claim does not stand up to careful scrutiny”. Insiders possess a “biography” that provides a “lived familiarity” with the individuals and organisations being researched (Mercer, 2007: 3). I determined to record these relationships and familiarities in the last column of Appendix C – the Consolidated and Aggregated Interview Results.

As my research unfolded it became clear an ethnographic study focussed on leadership and organisational culture was not going to create the outcomes I had wanted in terms of organisational development. A more prevalent organisational issue emerged through the research and as the research developed it became clear that a change of tack would be advisable, I needed to supplement my ethnography with something more interventionist. This change of direction and focus was discussed at length with my supervisor, as was the potential requirement to initiate a new ethical approval process but since little else had changed other than an awareness that even during the interviews (already approved) action was already underway then it was determined that I was not required to start the ethical approval process again despite the methodology evolving into action research.

## 4.3 Method of Inquiry

### 4.3.1 Interviews

Qualitative research can have challenges around the “adequacy of data” purports Ponterotto and Grieger (2007: 414) which can be overcome through the use of “sufficient information-rich cases (e.g. interviewees)”. They go on to recommend that the selection of those being interviewed are those with “in-depth experience with the phenomena under study” and who at the same time are able to “effectively express these experiences”. I kept this in mind as I selected the interview participants. According to Cadle et al. (2014) one to one interviews remains one of the main analytical and elicitation techniques used by organisational researchers and business analysts in search of information. Interviews are considered as “a key way of accessing the interpretations of informants in the field” (Walsham, 2006: 323). They are valuable as an approach towards elicitation, for “examining the mental models and establishing mental maps” and consequently claims, Dijkstra and Van Eijnatten (2005: 146), “theories in use” that was to become a key theme emerging as my research unfolded.

As far as the interview structure is concerned Mercer (2007: 10) claims that semi-structured interviews are preferred to more formally structured processes and states that an “interactive/conversational approach may yield more extensive data” as long as the interviewer is prepared to cope with “digression and reordering of questions in the interest of establishing rapport”. This was to become an important aspect as my questions and the interview process evolved through the research period. It is within interpretivist research that “semi-structured and unstructured interviews” are utilised to begin to “explore different meanings, perceptions, and interpretations of organisational members” Cunliffe (2011: 659). Interviews as conversations, where participants reflect together both issues and insights, are potentially more informative and have greater potential for evolving into action (Cunliffe, 2011). Shotter’s (2006) position is stronger still, he warns against meeting the interviewees in anything other than “a situation of open-ended dialogue” and indicates that following check-lists or predetermined questionnaires risk humiliating the interviewee leading to a missed opportunity in the cocreation of a “dynamically unfolding inter-activity from within which relevant ‘action guiding call’ can emerge” (Ibid: 593). Interviews as conversations are also claimed to be able to become catalysts for new ways of thinking and also to generate actionable knowledge for both the “interviewer” and the “interviewee” as they operate within a “mutual learning situation” (Greenwood and Levin, 2007: 51). Interviews in this way have the ability to impact both the research and any ensuing actions.



#### 4.3.2 Questions To Start The Conversation

Based upon my experience and initial research I developed a list of questions overtime with the focus on confirming or otherwise the presence of specific organisational themes as described in Chapter 2. These questions were used as triggers to gain insights from the interviews and record how many times or how important the interviewee's thoughts these themes were to our organisational effectiveness. The questions were created merging academic literature with my own knowledge of the context as reinforced through previous assessments. This initial list of questions was drawn from the context explained in Chapter 2 and the table below shows the questions and flow that I started my interviews off with as well as the main sources that encouraged these questions over others.

#	Question	To Illuminate	Derived/Informed From Which Source
1	In terms of your leadership is there anything that you do differently as a consequence of the organisational culture awareness process?	If the interviewees notice any changes in their styles as a consequence of the cultural awareness process. To start to look for any common themes emerging within my context.	Research showing the link between leadership and organisational culture (Kotter and Heskett, 1992; Schein, 2010).
2	In terms of your leadership and the way you communicate has anything changed as a result of the organisational culture awareness process?	If the process had affected the methods of communication within the JWC.	Staff surveys revealed that lower scoring attributes had communications as an apparent common thread (Hargreaves, 2012).
3	In terms of your leadership and the language you use has anything changed as a result of the organisational culture awareness process?	If the anecdotal reports of a “common language” appearing, was supported by the Command Group and Branch Heads.	Research showing linkages between leadership and language (Denning, 2007; Marquardt, 2005).
4	In terms of your leadership what would you say was the most impactful part of the organisational culture awareness process?	To identify any popular themes that seemed to resonate with the JWC and be able study these with a view to advising other similar organisations.	Leadership as defined by personal traits or popular leadership themes - how to be/how to do (Jackson and Parry, 2010).
5	In terms of your leadership what would you say was the least impactful part of the organisational culture awareness process?	To identify any unpopular themes that seemed to resonate with the JWC and be able	Leadership as defined by personal traits or popular leadership themes - how to be/how to do (Jackson and Parry, 2010).

		study these with a view to advising other similar organisations against their use.	
6	Is there anything else that comes to mind regarding leadership and the organisational culture awareness process?	To reveal anything that was missed, to identify blind spots and create a redirect for my research if required.	A desire to reduce the impact of my research leading the interviewees in certain directions, to reduce confirmation bias and the inherent power of the interviewer (Hammond et al., 1998; Bazerman and Moore, 2008).

**Table 5 – Intermediate Interview Questions**

### 4.3.3 Data Analysis

Within ethnography multimodal sources are encouraged, rich data is integrated and “relationalising” performed (Tacchi et al.: 2003) so as to reveal a holistic picture. Surveys are not performed and analysed separately from research journals and interviews are not isolated from physical observations. Ethnographers “try to look at all this knowledge and experience together and in relation to each other” (Ibid: 12), they try to make sense of it. They do so in the full awareness and appreciation of multiple realities, experiences and interpretations (Cunliffe et al., 2015) that has the potential to create copious amounts of data. If “adequacy of the data” is critical and important then “adequacy of interpretation” is equally critical and important (Ponterotto and Grieger, 2007: 415). To some extent, the reiterative nature of action research lends itself to thorough interpretation by the “deep immersion” of the researcher to lead to an “intimacy with the data” coming from cycles of analysing, interpreting and researching (Ibid).

Semler (1997: 27) claims that solid theory starts with a broad analysis of “observational and case study data to identify any patterns of themes that seem to emerge from the phenomenon under study.” Interpreting qualitative data can be challenging (Bazerley and Jackson, 2013) and has been questioned in terms of its rigour, auditability and transparency. Thematic analysis attempts to make qualitative interpretation more auditable and transparent (Wainwright and Waring, 2008), altogether more rigorous.

### 4.3.4 Thematic Analysis

Walsham (2006: 324) insists that “Theory can be used as an initial guide to design and data collection” and as described within the paragraph on my interview questions I used practice and theory as the source of my questions, and the questions and responses were transcribed from the recording of each of the interviews performed.

Analysing transcriptions effectively involves a number of critical tasks (Ryan and Bernard, 2003: 85):

- The discovery of themes
- “winnowing” the important themes to “a manageable few”
- creating theme hierarchies and
- connecting the themes to established theoretical models.

Themes are intended to locate key things that are important within the data relating to the question being researched, “the ‘keyness’ of a theme is not necessarily dependant on quantifiable measures – but rather on whether it captures something important in relation to the overall research question” (Braun and Clarke, 2008: 82). Gioia et al., (2012: 21) reinforce the importance of this foundation; “No data structure, know nothing” they claim indicating the significance of analysing data in a structured, logical, inductive and illuminating manner.

Tacchi et al. (2003) are not alone in thinking that thematic analysis is not simply generating a list and fitting them into genres, it involves interpretation and it is incumbent upon researchers to “demonstrate (through a transcendent story line) how the themes relate to one another and how the gestalt of the findings sheds light on the phenomena under study.” (Ponterotto and Grieger, 2007: 413). Researchers have an important responsibility to identify critical, relevant themes as the exploration unfolds. As the unfolding research journey, informed by those themes, follows a trajectory guided by those themes (Ryan and Bernard, 2003: 86). Themes may be revealed and developed through the interviews in the moment, and/or later on “pawing through the texts” to expose repetitions, metaphors and multiple accounts of similar experiences (Ryan and Bernard, 2003). Effective analysis of themes “involves searching *across* a data set to find repeated patterns of meanings” (Braun and Clarke, 2008: 86).

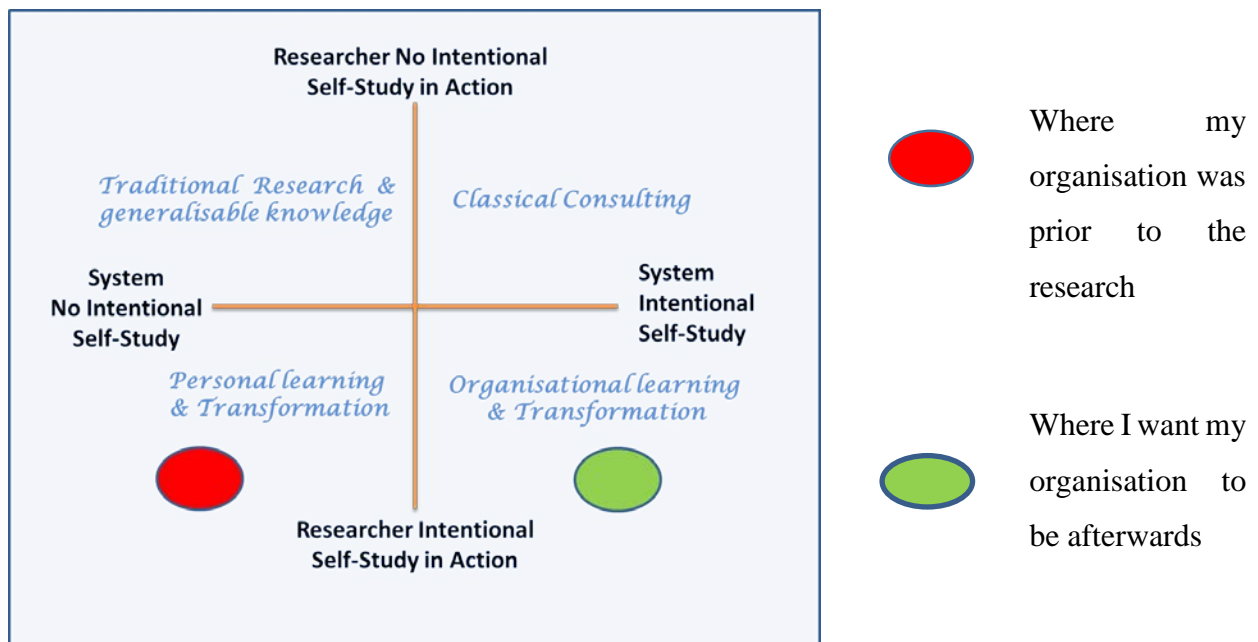
Wainwright and Waring (2008) warn against being overly reliant upon coding as this may lead to may lead to incomplete or stifled analysis as a researcher is seduced into fitting loosely coupled themes together and missing the richer picture (Bazerley and Jackson, 2013: 8). Others claim the opposite, that thematic analysis is useful because its ability to summarise key characteristics of large data sets, it enables a “thick” description to emerge, is particularly useful “with participants as collaborators” and is said to have the potential “to generate unanticipated insights” (Braun and Clarke, 2008: 97). “Thick” descriptions described as being the “linchpin of qualitative writing” according to Ponterotto and Grieger (2007: 415). It was as a consequence of the “thick descriptions” that emerged, that drove a change in the methodology as the first research iteration ended.

## 4.4 Summary

My research was performed as qualitative research, initially based upon ethnography given its relevance into researching cultures and leadership. As the research matured it became evident that what I was looking at was no longer a somewhat disassociated analysis into leadership themes but rather the analysis of an emergent leadership phenomenon that was hidden, in plain view (Shotter, 2010). In trying to really understand what was going on in my own organisation I sensed an opportunity to help it evolve. Cunliffe et al., (Chapter 4, 2008) advise that it is futile to avoid the effects of “the situated experience of researching” and I have realised that even in asking questions in the initial informal workshops I was already performing action research to some extent; bridging the academia/practice divide.

### 4.4.1 Individual and Organisational Learning

Jackson and Parry (2010:35) advise that trying to figure out “what is going on here?” is likely to dominate and drive the way that the research evolves. That may involve inductive insights as one sees “connections between aspects of one’s circumstances that one has not seen before – connections that might provide one with action guiding anticipations” (Shotter, 2010: 271). According to Bell and Thorpe (2013; 112), due to the dynamic and often interpretative nature of management research, it is not uncommon for researchers of management to only really understand their research methods after the research is completed. The research then will be a collaboration between me as a researcher and my management practice, or as Coghlan and Brannick (2010) refer to it as the “system” and my aim is to allow the development of both parties as shown on page 86:



**Figure 20 - Focus of Researcher and System Continuum (Coghlan and Brannick, 2010: 103)**

In this diagram Coghlan and Brannick, (2010, p. 103) show in quadrants the interdependencies and approaches associated with organisational and personal learning. My aim was to take my own personal learning through the DBA period and hopefully enable and encourage my organisation to develop alongside me to move from an environment where little organisational (system) study and learning was evident to a place where organisational learning and development, the study of itself and reacting to the results of the study, would be embedded into the organisation's procedures as well as the mindsets or the organisation's leaders.

#### 4.4.2 Methodology and Methods Mapped Across The Wider DBA Timeline

Bell and Thorpe (2013: 133) articulate that "Management research is an area where a great deal of the skills, knowledge and competence that goes into doing it, is acquired tacitly, rather than explicitly." In Figure 21 below I display across a timeline, both the research and subsequent interventions and the impact of the research through time. The green timeline represents specifically the thesis-related activities and the blue timeline the phases and activities where the impact was felt; either as a consequence of immediately trying to bring my learning back into my organisation (through interventions, articles and workshops) or as the thesis interventions.

Coghlan and Holian (2015: 3) describe action research as an “emergent inquiry process engaged in an unfolding story, where data shift as a consequence of intervention and where it is not possible to predict or to control what takes place.”. It is said that “excellent action research” (Reason, 2004: 270) evolves in and through time, reflexively in the moment and through periods of associated and disassociated reflection; prioritising “reflection in action” over “reflection on action” (Anderson et al, 2015: 68). Referring again to Figure 21 it may appear that the flows captured in the Figure were independent, in fact, I continued to connect organisational learning and transformation with personal learning and transformational learning (Coghlan and Brannick, 2010) throughout the period of the research and long after the research was completed.



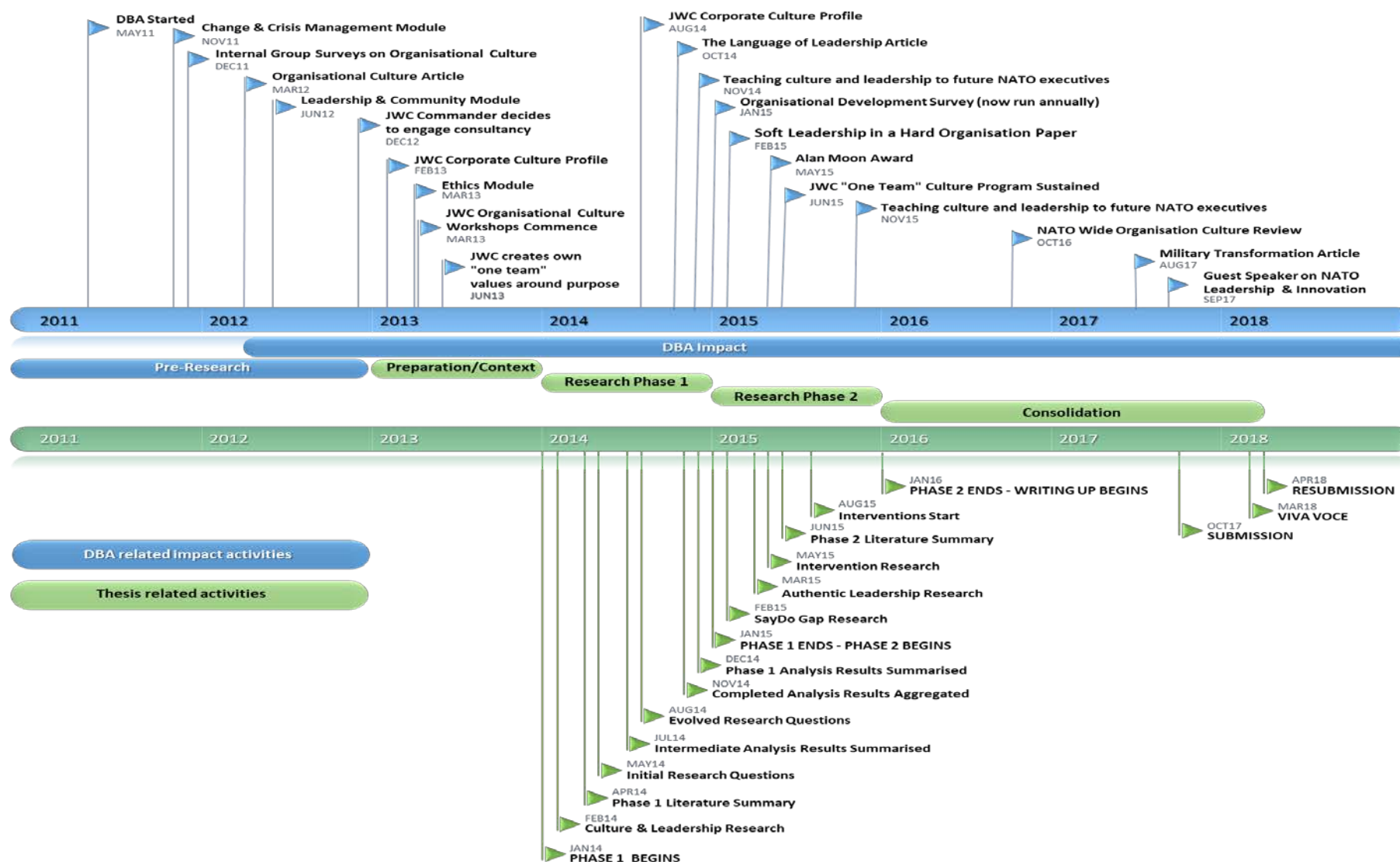


Figure 21 - Research, Interventions and Impact through Time

## Chapter 5 – The STORY

This Chapter describes the history and drivers that influenced the direction that my research commenced from and goes on to explain why the research focus was adjusted. It tells the research story in two phases; Phase 1 supported by the literature described in Chapter 3 describes the research journey up to a change of research direction and focus as a reaction to the analysis performed. Phase 2, also informed by the literature in Chapter 3, describes how I integrated literature and research into organisational interventions to facilitate personal and organisational development. In Figure 20 I attempt to visualise this shift in focus through time as the process of iterative analysis/research cycles shifted my attention and how my contextual and situational awareness grew thereby setting the scene for the action story part 2.

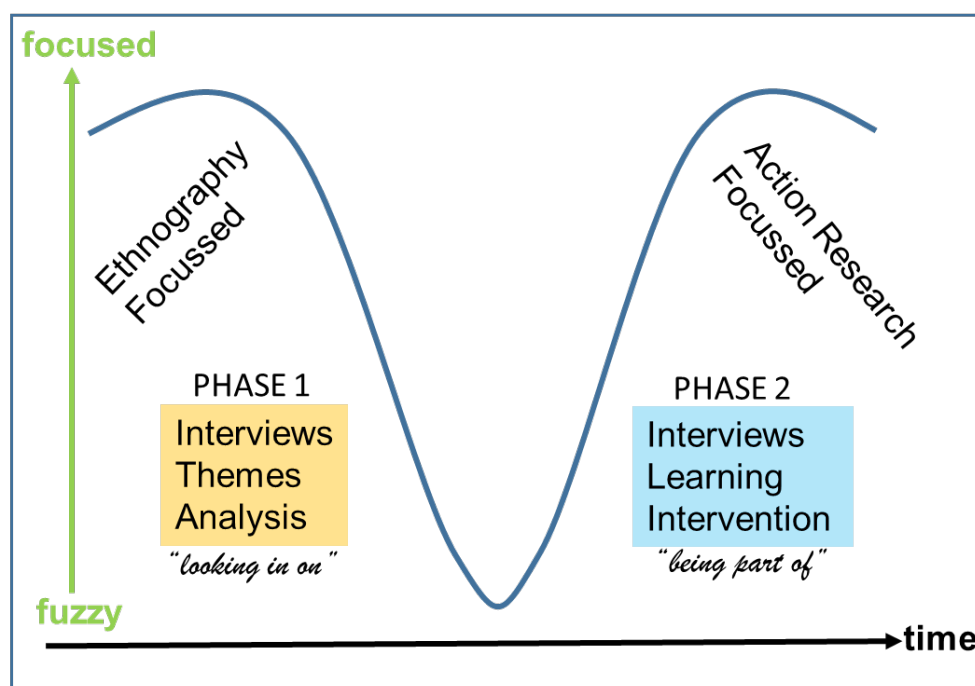


Figure 22 - Research Focus Through Time

### 5.1 Story Part 1

In the period before Phase one, through the DBA and my own research into management and organisation, I had come to appreciate in the literature that leadership theories had evolved from looking for, or developing traits, to something more suited to the organisational environment where that leadership was practised; regarding organisational culture I had come to believe that certain organisational themes would stand out and began to anticipate that these

themes and leadership traits would come together to reveal certain areas where developmental options would be revealed. I had not at that stage spent much time looking at authenticity in leadership as I was not aware of the challenges that my organisation appears to have in this regard.

### 5.1.1 Influences On JWC Organisational Culture And Leadership

The NATO Military Structure is made up of soldiers, sailors, airmen and women from the 29-member nations and military organisations do not exist as microcosms but are responsive to strong national demographic influences; what is considered as good leadership practice in one situation may not be considered so for another nation and so forth. My 300-person practice is representative; it is a diversely populated mix from 15 of the NATO member nations and there are national and service tensions evident that influence how international military leadership is enacted. The JWC is composed of a mix of Nations and services (Army, Navy and Air Force) embedded within a strict hierarchy reinforced through the application of C<sup>2</sup>. Military organisations generally tend to be proud stable bodies whose success is often attributed to the application of formal processes that are trainable, repeatable and somewhat intractable (Meijer, 2012). They have strong organisational cultures that are notoriously difficult to change (March, 2008). Militaries seek out and strive for uniformity and do so by “emphasizing core values that become an integral part of military culture and experience” (Redmond et al., 2015: 14). Many organisations have evolved their organisational cultures to adapt to the times yet in most cases for military entities formal hierarchies and “chains of command” remain prevalent. Hardly surprising given that military C<sup>2</sup> practices have evolved through hundreds of years’ worth of military operations and doctrine development. Ironically the JWC, the site of the research, is charged with “transformation”; it is meant to innovate, develop new concepts, to challenge former processes and reliance upon hierarchy yet it seeks to do so through the same practices and processes that are applied to the rest of NATO.

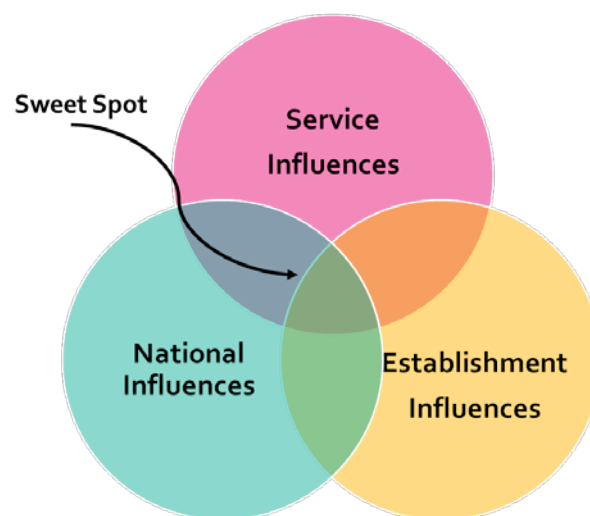
NATO organisational structures are relatively fixed and very difficult to change requiring NAC approval and whilst NATO invests heavily on creating commonality within formal processes how these organisations operate internally, how work actually gets done, is determined by things that are far less tangible. So, in spite of the commonality structurally and procedurally within NATO HQ’s, individual HQ’s still tend to have different cultures and consequently work differently; an example is the HQs that have identical mandates, the Joint Force Commands in Brunssum and Naples (see Figure 2). When I asked people who had worked at both these HQs, of their day to day experiences, I was consistently told that they were totally

different in the way things got done. One staff officer remarked that “**the way they worked was poles apart**” and here we start to feel the pervasive influence of organisational cultures; same structures, same processes, but so dependent upon the individuals filling the positions in the command. Individuals with life stories, personal histories tempered through service and national influences, all of which have a profound impact on the leadership practices within the organisation.

National operational caveats, driven by political and geopolitical aspirations, provide a good example of how nationality impacts the organisation. Germany for example, described as “the poster child for caveats” (Saideman and Auerswald, 2012: 76), has an approach whereby their soldiers are the most constrained, being unable to deploy into certain areas. The US, on the other hand, have far fewer constraints placed upon them and consequently, end up in the most challenging operational environments. The coming together of these national cultures into a multinational setting is challenging in many areas as Schein (2010:397) points out “Cultural diversity breeds more communication problems, especially at hierarchic boundaries because the rules of deference and demeanour are so highly variable around the world and across occupations.” As we have already seen in Chapter 3 deference and demeanour are highly relevant for an organisation dependent upon C<sup>2</sup>.

Service tensions (challenges in operating “jointly” independent of the service) are often also very evident and these tensions create significant challenges for leadership. How a Turkish Army sergeant anticipates and reacts to leadership is very different from how a Norwegian Air Force sergeant expects to be led. Hofstede et al (2010: 61) remarking that power distance, the extent by which those lower in an organisation expect and consent to power being unequally distributed, is shaped by the origins of the individual with Northern Europeans being less likely to accept high power distance than those in southern Europe (Ibid: 82). What people from Asia believe is important in an organisational setting is not always what northern Europeans might consider an organisational norm. These aspects, grounded in Chapter 3, and to be contextualised within the story in Chapter 5, will show how the JWC measured the current organisational culture and determined where it wanted to be instead. These surveys were both internally created (by me through the DBA program) and externally created (through an independent consultancy) and revealed areas of perceived weaknesses as well as strengths. Leaders identified and then espoused the sort of culture they wanted to see, they created and published a set of JWC values (Appendix D); to inform behaviours and leaders were asked by the commander to “live the values”.

In order to operate effectively, an organisation may strive to operate in such a way that national, service and the establishment in which they serve do not create unnecessary tensions or organisational confusion. Leadership then, if it is to be effective should strive to find a way to operate within the sweet spot of these cultural influences. It follows that the establishment, the organisational influences, have more ability to be shaped by leaders than national or service influences that are largely predetermined historically.

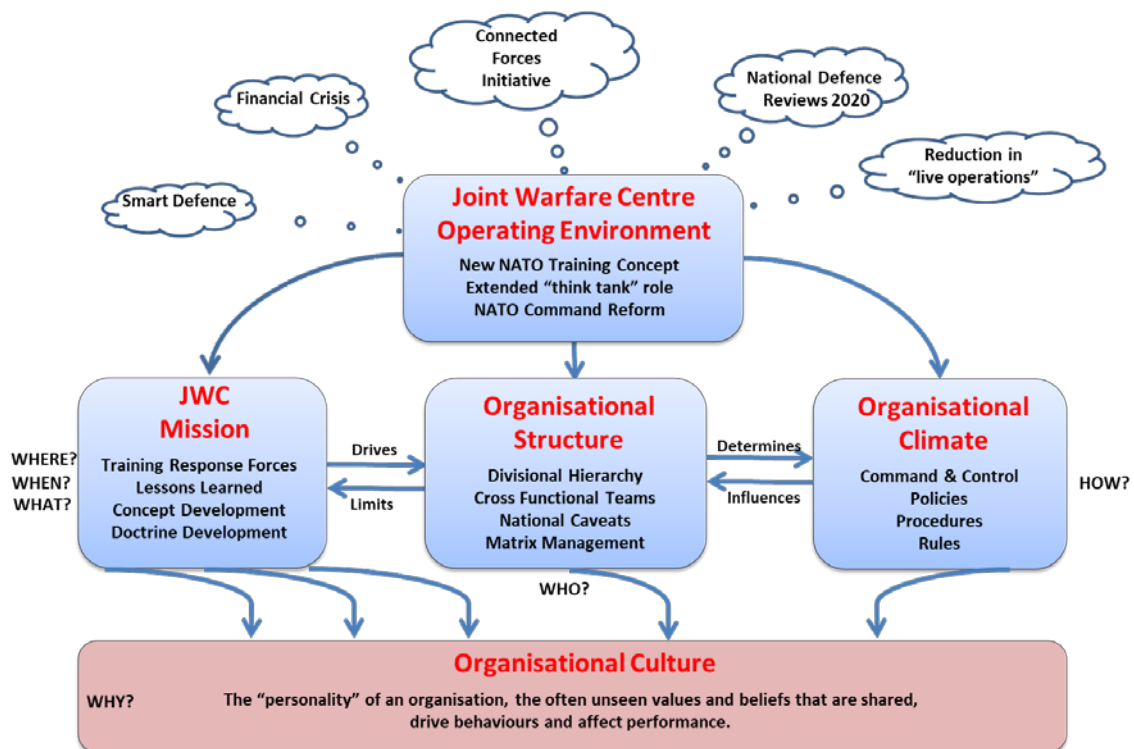


**Figure 23 - Overlapping cultural influences**

Dauber et al., (2012: 2) in discussing a “configuration model of organisational culture” describe organisations as a feature of the “dynamics relationships between four central and recurring organisational characteristics”; strategy, structure, culture and operations as described in Chapter 2. The JWC’s strategy is evolving as a response to a changing world (predominantly the reduction in activities in Afghanistan and the rise in tensions due to a resurgent Russia), its structure is being modified to try and be more responsive in allocating resources to task, climate in terms of adopting, where we can, more effective operations through policy and procedural alignment and finally through intentionally shaping our organisational culture and all these efforts are dependent upon effective and appropriate leadership.

### 5.1.2 JWC Operating Environment

As explained within the Chapter 2 describing the research context the external environment of the JWC is dynamic and evolving. The JWC mandate falls under the strategic commander who is tasked with NATO Transformation. This sets the environment under which JWC operates and alongside this transformational mandate other external influences are impacting our organisation. The model below was introduced in Chapter 3 and it has been contextualised to create an organisational model for the NATO JWC.



**Figure 24 - JWC Alignment: Contextual Model**

### 5.1.3 JWC Mission

The operating environment impacts the mission of the JWC, sets the focus of the commander and should align all other organisational constructs to support and ultimately deliver the mission objectives. In the military context, missions are filtered down from the very top of the organisation (in NATO's case the NAC) and the organisations receiving these missions have very little room to negotiate, they are expected to get them done.

### 5.1.4 JWC Organisational Structure

Structures can be described as "the manifestation of strategic orientations and regulate information flows, decision making, and patterns of behaviour", it means that "levels of

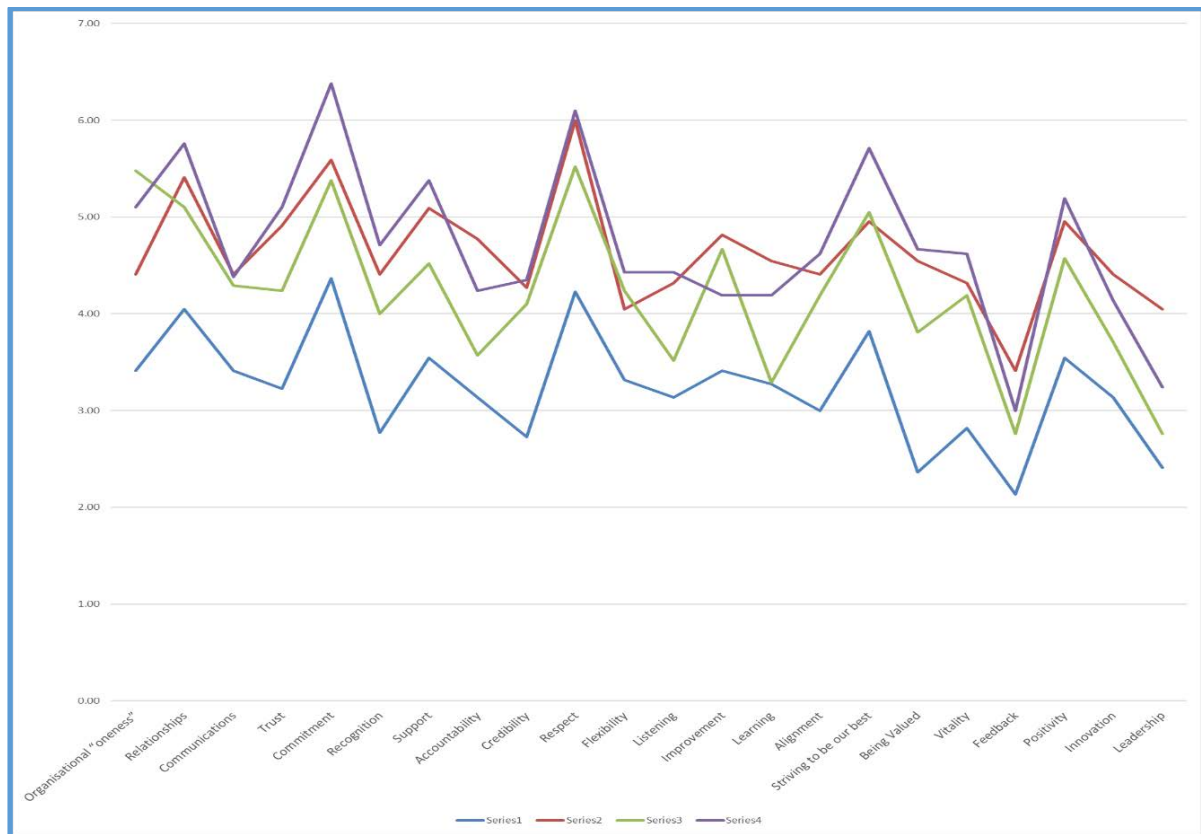
hierarchy and control” are located within this domain (Dauber et al., 2012: 7). O’Toole et al.’s (2008: 39) posit that an individual’s agency within an organisation is limited by the very structures of that organisation. They go on to say that this phenomenon is “exacerbated hierarchical organisations found in the armed forces with their emphasis on rank and chain of command.” The structure also has a symbiotic relationship with the procedures, policies and rules utilised, the “climate” of the organisation (Schneider, 1996).

#### 5.1.5 JWC Organisational Climate

Organisational climates are defined by the policies and procedures in place, are overt and intentionally normative in nature; they are descriptions, often written, about how things are to be done. An organisation’s climate then lends itself “to direct observation and measurement” (Schein, 1990: 109). Schneider et al. (1996: 9) offer a model where he states that “Climate and culture are interconnected. Employees’ values and beliefs (part of culture) influence their interpretations of organisational policies, practices, and procedures (climate).” Climate refers to a specific context (in this situation this is what you do), it is both specific and temporal and is according to Denison (1996: 640) at risk of being “subject to direct manipulation by people with power and influence”. Cultures on the other hand, are more generalised, historical “collectively held, and sufficiently complex to resist any attempts at direct manipulation” (Ibid: 644).

#### 5.1.6 JWC Organisational Culture

Underpinning these critical organisational components of mission, structure and climate is the organisational culture. The values and beliefs that exist in the minds of the people in the organisation. As mentioned in the context the JWC has defined values (Appendix D) that espouse innovation, support, inclusivity and accountability and has made great efforts in publicising and promoting these on order to try and reinforce and embed these values in the staff working upon Schein’s (2010: 18) claim that “culture has a normative effect upon organisations”. Informed by the literature then I set about trying to determine how the JWC’s culture looked across a broad number of themes already presented in the context and the results of this internal analysis can be seen below as Figure 25:



**Figure 25 - JWC Organisational Culture Snapshots**

What I believe is interesting here in Figure 25 is that the shape of the curve remains consistent, over a 3-year period, whatever the mix of people surveyed. Organisationally we have the same peaks and troughs, I informally briefed the JWC Chief of Staff (COS) on what the results of the surveys; expressing that they were revealing, fairly consistently, a pattern (low “feedback” scores, low “appreciation” scores, high “commitment”, high “respect” scores). It was from evidence like this I started to develop my interview process and questions.

#### 5.1.7 Interview Construct

Utilising semi-structured one to one interviews with 18 senior leaders and managers I attempted to provide an environment where the leaders and managers can reflect and talk about any relationships between culture and their leadership. To be transparent here I disclose that I fully expected and wanted to hear an explanation of the shape of the graph; I wanted them to ponder and describe any changes for them personally, between themselves at the senior levels and also with each other as they go about their leadership. With the agreement of the interviewees, the interviews were all recorded and then the recording transcribed. The transcriptions enabled me to make a deeper analysis, decipher, codify the data and, importantly to revisit the text on the basis of new themes emerging.



Half of my interviewees were from the very top layer of our organisation (Command Group) and I refer to these as the “leaders” (positional, a noun rather than performance, a verb) and half of them who operated as direct reports to the Command Group (Branch Heads) and I refer to these as the “managers”. The nine “leaders” represented all on the command group that had been in JWC more than a year. They were not screened in any other way than being in the role of senior decision makers with some corporate knowledge.

The managers (Branch Heads) had all also been at the JWC for more than a year and through the culture awareness workshops described in Chapter 2. Potentially there were 20 candidates at this level in the organisation I selected nine so as to have some balance to the leader-manager ratio. Everyone I asked agreed to participate and signed consent forms. I was interested in analysing their experiences of the leaders and their perceptions of their leadership practice. I wanted to understand how they experienced leadership in the organisation. I factored in their availability and, based upon “insider knowledge” selected individuals who would not be afraid to speak their minds. These individuals had performed strongly over their respective pre-JWC tours and in some cases within JWC had been selected for special assignments. The selected managers were well respected amongst their peers and leaders, trusted agents, often called upon to lead specific missions, they were highly respected by the leaders for their capabilities. They were, in effect, the JWC’s “tempered radicals” (Meyerson and Scully, 1995) knowledgeable, confident, vocal and robust enough to tell their story.

Where possible, as this filtering allowed, I mixed nationalities and service but not gender. We have no females currently operating at this level in my centre. The spread is shown below in Table 6.

<b>Command Group (Leaders)</b>	USA	German	UK	USA	Norway	German	France	Norway	Norway
	55	58	52	47	54	54	48	56	56
	Air Force	Army	Army	Army	Civilian	Army	Army	Army	Navy
<b>Branch Heads (Managers)</b>	Danish	USA	Turkish	UK	USA	UK	UK	German	Canada
	55	40	48	44	46	51	48	54	52
	Army	Navy	Civilian	Navy	Marine	Army	Air Force	Army	Navy

**Table 6 – Demographic Spread of Interviewees**

I determined based around the staff's rotation period (typically two years) that I would not be able to show my research or finding to the participants, this was understood and accepted by all the people who took part.

#### 5.1.8 Interview Considerations

As well as using the literature as I prepared for the interviews I thought about the military context and so decided to utilise the NATO "best practice" techniques for successfully interviewing military personnel (Thordsen et al., 2012). The interviews were unhurried leaving time for the respondents to gather their thoughts, I also tried very hard to use "silence" and left where appropriate gaps to allow the respondent time to reflect and formulate their response (Kline, 1999). Cunliffe (2011: 664) reminds us that research involving interviews, particularly semi or unstructured ones, is "relational" research and positions the researcher as being "an integral part of meaning making" and urges researchers to be aware of the influential role the researcher plays in the process. I decided that the interviewees may be more comfortable being interviewed in their own offices rather than mine and so all interviews were performed in locations where they should have been more at ease than in a different place. In order to release myself from the burden of remembering or writing the actual words used I recorded the interviews and I listened to the recordings twice, highlighted text and noted down key themes.

I followed the methodology related to ethical research and took great care to try and ensure that no harm came to the participants (Mercer, 2007). I was not so careful around securing my own safety and was not prepared fully for the polarising effect researching my own leaders seemed to have nor the impact upon me personally as I describe in more detail in Chapter 6. As far as the researched were concerned I was able to follow the processes described in the methodology and methods Chapter. I maintained all data securely and stripped the data of anything that would identify where the data originated from. When feeding back to the organisation the findings I was careful to talk only in generic terms so that only those who had provided their insights, that were now useful as feedback, were aware that they were responsible for the data.

Timing the research was a challenge; the JWC is required to perform much of their output, the training of staff from other HQ's, in various locations away from the site in Stavanger, Norway. This meant that I had to stagger interviews based on their availability and workload and in some cases, this led to weeks between some interviews and several months between the first

and final interviews. The downside to that approach was that I was then performing the interviews within a different context for the interviewees; the upside was that it allowed me to start to analyse the data and start to see patterns in their responses. In any case, as I reflected upon this situation it was clear that I was unable to do anything about it. I decided therefore to utilise the time between the interviews to type up recordings, review my interview notes, analyse the transcripts and review my journal. This decision influenced heavily the change of research direction that was to come as part way through the interviews as I became aware of something that appeared to be emerging was more prevalent and consistent than the themes I had expected to find and I cover that in more detail later in this Chapter.

#### 5.1.9 Interview Process

During the interview introductions, I followed a prewritten script that explained my personal interest in the topic and my desire to encourage some sort of organisational development. I tried hard to remain transparent throughout the process and hoped that would bring out the same from the participants. Walsham (2006: 322) warns that participants “may be less open and honest with the researcher in cases where he or she is perceived to have a vested interest.”

According to Braun and Clarke (2008: 83) the theory associated with the analysis of interviews involves starting to look at the transcriptions and data with no preconceived ideas of what themes will emerge, “a process of coding the data without trying to fit it into a pre-existing coding frame,” thereby ensuring that the analysis performed is driven by the data and not from the “researcher’s analytical preconceptions”. I did not find that this was practical in my case and as I highlighted in the methodology chapter my own preconceptions, reinforced by being data-driven, were not easily put aside. Other researchers claim that generating themes is not as a result of following “mechanical or scientific” processes, but rather that it involves interpretation through exploration of the data. The themes that emerge “will depend on what is important to the people you are studying; what is interesting to you and your project; what you think is going on.” Tacchi et al. (2003: 42). Given that I had already a number of themes that had emerged through the internal surveys I was already expecting to see some themes strongly represented in the interview and following the transcript analysis.

#### 5.1.10 Interview Analysis

Given the challenges I had with interviewee availability exposed in 5.1.8, I determined to analyse my notes from the reflexive journal (Table 10) and the transcripts between interviews

and start to fill out the thematic grid (Appendix F). The grid was consequently already populated with some themes that my own early internal research had exposed and then enhanced with themes that the literature review had informed me were likely to feature. I refer to these in this thesis as the “themes” so as to differentiate from other unexpected higher-level topics which were later revealed. In addition, prompted by an awareness of the serendipitous nature of management research, I left empty rows across this grid for new themes to be revealed through the interviews. In following the approach described by Wainwright and Waring (2008: 92) described in Chapter 2 as themes were mentioned, or as new ones emerged, I made note of the theme and how relevant that theme appeared to be for the interviewee. My intention in this part was to try and identify and record the presence of themes within the interviews that had already been revealed through my own workshops and through staff surveys whilst capturing any new themes that emerged.

As I completed my fifth interview and subsequent analysis I started to become aware that themes I had expected to hear about, that I had been already prepared to reconfirm within the thematic grid, did not feature as often, nor were they as important to the interviewees, as I had assumed. There was little in terms of correlation with the themes that both my literature review, and my own experiences, suggested would be present. Indeed, within their individual descriptions, themes I had anticipated were sometimes not mentioned at all, or if they were, they seemed to be lower in significance to the topics they instead wanted to emphasise, examples of which can be seen within the thematic grid at Appendix F. Themes reported in these early interviews appeared to be highly individual and, in many cases, unique as can be seen in Appendix C (themes emerging column) although several of them that were not unique and resonated with more than one person are shown below by topic.

#### *5.1.10.1 Walking The Talk*

In terms of the alignment of the words leaders used and the subsequent deeds observed it was recognised as being an important feature for our organisation. One leader even announced that he had edited his signature block to account for how important authenticity and coherence was for him:

***L8 – “I put in my signature block “say what you do and do what you say! So everybody can see that and I try to stick to that.”***

Despite it being known that walking the talk was important though it was evident that it was not being observed as the following examples from the interviews show:

***L2 – “for people, it’s just talk right now, need to get to action, deeds not words (repeated 3 times), real disconnect what we are doing and what we think we are doing, know do gap”***

***M6 – “Being aware is not the same as acting on it. There is definitely a piece missing about leading by example. If you want certain behaviours you have to live by it. Do as I do and do as I say. You must live by what you say, because if you don’t it’s a credibility issue again.”***

These statements reinforced a growing awareness in me that both leaders and managers knew how important it was to be authentic and yet were not being observed as walking the talk.

#### ***5.1.10.2 Too old to change***

Many of the leaders who claimed to know how important it was to be authentic and that they had changed along the way were also claiming that the time for change had passed them by or that there was nothing in it for them to adopt different leadership behaviours. This again reinforced my thinking towards a lack of authenticity:

***L5 – “Certain structures of behaviour are fixed, I do not pretend to change my behaviour.”***

***L9 – “We are mostly over 50 and a cynical (mentioned 7 times during the interview) bunch”***

Another manager not only hinted at the relative seniority of the leaders and managers but also raised the issue I introduced in Chapter 3 (3.1.5) which was the sometimes polarising impact of nationality.

***M8 – “It’s not relevant for us. I am sceptical about the survey and cynical about the results. Many people here are at the end of their careers with too much deference to National lines rather than military chains of command.”***

#### ***5.1.10.3 Leadership Is Power***

Many managers and leaders seemed to connect leadership and power in such a way that orders and commands were indications of leadership in action. Many claimed to want empowerment and autonomy and yet others stated the opposite.

***L6 – “What I am sometimes missing is that an order is an order and that we are really used to follow or to give orders and that a timeline is a timeline and not a basis for a new discussion.”***

***M9 – “As a marine I might say “I need YOU to do this, can you do it?” or I might not ask that, just say “Get it done!” The ability for somebody to say “no I don’t want to do something for personal reasons” and there’s no repercussions to it amazes me.”***

Several of those interviewed recorded they most fulfilling leadership moments was when they had the most direct power as shown by the quote that follows:

***M1 – “Missing the “old days”, I was a platoon, company, battalion leadership commander, my Battalion was 700”***

#### ***5.1.10.4 Leadership Is Based On Traits***

A fourth aspect that resonated with my literature review was that some clearly felt that certain traits defined leadership and that “perfect leadership” could be taught and somehow stayed as relevant, in some cases for more than 30 years.

***L4 – “Well in my younger days you were educated that there is something which makes up a perfect leader. It’s best practice, part of officers training and education since the beginning.”***

Commanders act in one way, the others expected to act within another set of behaviours:

***L5 – “I expect the commander to give orders, the Chief of Staff to organise.”***

Finally, a trait that came up a number of times in the interviews was that leaders were sometimes considered to be somewhat distant and unavailable. Managers felt that there was not enough contact with the staff and that leadership by walking around was a trait that leaders should display:

***M2 – “Across the board we don’t see enough of the leaders wandering the corridors.”***

This was a rather challenging, occasionally dark time for me personally, as it unravelled what I thought I knew. The knowledge I had experientially, from the literature and expected to be reinforced through the study was found to be lacking. My way ahead remained unclear for several weeks as I tried to make sense of this. What was clear to me was that there was a disparity that seemed to be emerging and that my interview technique and content was not allowing sufficiently what appeared to be hidden, to reveal itself.

#### 5.1.11 Interview Evolution

This somewhat “strategic” pause though enabled me to realise that there was more in the transcripts and analysis than I was first prepared to see. The themes that I had from earlier experiences and surveys were there, but there was something else too, something more prevalent yet undiscovered. After some time and my stepping away from the search for themes I came to the realisation that my questions searching for themes was perhaps hindering the exposition of other organisational attributes, what I refer to as “topics”. After a break of some weeks, I returned to the analysis and whilst re-analysing the transcripts I started to sense something that drew me out of the detail and into the general, away from specifics and towards broader trends. This defocusing was initially counter-intuitive to me and I found myself troubled that I was no longer able to articulate what I didn’t know in terms of what I wanted to know. Looking at the data again as though it was new, as though it was the first time (Cunliffe, 2004) revealed new topics and provided different data, some of which was irrelevant for this research, but some which would not have emerged had I continued to search for the themes I was hoping to find. I intentionally made the decision not to religiously follow the prepared questions but rather allow the interviewee the room for manoeuvre to explore issues that were on their minds. This enabled some topics that might have remained hidden to emerge and occasionally these new topics provided a rich vein of discussions and pointers for action.

As I reflected again on the five interviews that I had performed already it became clear to me that by following a thoughtfully crafted “open-ended” interview script and following the questions dogmatically I was having unintended consequences. The approach generated diversions in, or stopped altogether, the flow of the discussion and the flow of the information. It also became evident that some of the leaders and managers just wanted to be heard; I felt that many of the interviewees seemed to have prepared what they wanted to get off their chest. Any attempts to follow the semi-structured process I had intended to follow was unable to prevent

a diversion to something that they felt just needed to be aired or shared. Consequently, although I still explored each area of interest looking for themes I did so more as the conversation evolved; instead of me guiding the interview I purposefully enabled the interviewee to take the lead. As a conscious reaction to the new emerging themes, I determined to widen the envelope of the interviews to broaden the perspective to try and determine whether there was consistency in the results that had so far emerged through the process. These evolved questions are shown below:

- **Did the organisational culture alignment process affect your leadership?**
- **Did the organisational culture awareness process affect how you communicate?**
- **Did you observe changes in the leadership of your peers?**
- **Did you observe changes in the leadership of leaders (if a manager) or managers (if a leader)**
- **Did you observe changes in the way you communicate with your peers?**
- **Did you observe changes in the way that leaders (if a manager) or managers (if a leader) communicate?**

I had not at this point given up all hope of discovering organisational and leadership themes but as I mentioned in section 5.1.10 I was also by now fairly sure there was something else lurking beneath the surface. As the follow-on interviews were performed I still “ticked off” the themes that were covered and only if they had not been explored through the interview did I then raise them.

So despite continuing to hold a strong personal view that leadership and culture are related and that certain themes would reveal themselves as being a help or hindrance to an organisational culture change programme, I needed to put that to the back of my mind and look more closely at what was being presented, to ask myself what was really going on here. Through the thematic analysis, and part way through the interviews, an unexpected and much broader organisational topic emerged; that there appeared to be a fundamentally different view of leaders as they saw themselves compared with that seen through the eyes of the managers.



#### 5.1.12 Aggregating the Feedback

When aggregating the feedback and trying to make sense of the thick descriptions emerging organisational dissonances become profoundly evident. Predicted themes gave way to unexpected topics. I offer three examples of the several that could be used to exemplify this. Taking for example the theme of communication, leaders typically claimed that they and the organisation had become better at it:

*L2 - “I think it’s a huge, huge leap forward probably one of the most significant things that we have done, there is a common language across the organisation, things that are understood the same way by everybody”*  
*“It’s been really exciting to see a common language across the Joint Warfare Centre. With the culture shaping process that we’ve gone through for the past year or so has been really good for me personally because it has given us all a common language to speak.”*

Another interviewee also expressed the view that a common language was beginning to emerge in a way that had not been predicted or intended:

*L3 – “In the language we started to use and it was not given as a requirement to use a certain language at a certain point but people started using certain language which is now during the process we already went through as the organisation.....this is a kind of common language we have created and it develops it develops from the day-to-day business.*

Another respondent identified that the senior leadership team were now giving feedback that others in the organisation were responding to:

*L9 - “I think the senior leadership is doing well, and telling people that they are doing a good job, in a credible way, I think they are very good at what they do.”*

At first glance there seems to be a compelling view of development and growth; until their direct reports, the managers’ responses are considered where some of their responses were in sharp contrast to the leaders’ version of reality:

***M7 - “There is definitely a change in communication but I’m not sure it’s all for the better, if you really want people to care you need to talk to people directly not send an email, not make a phone call, and you need to seriously listen to what people have to say, not just to pay lip service”***

Not only does this quote challenge the claims of the leaders, it also starts to reveal a perceived lack of authenticity. This is reinforced other managers:

***M3 - “I hear them speaking a lot of good speak but it’s not believable and that actually makes the whole situation worse”***

Another manager talked about the apparent lack of consistency in the approach of the senior leadership team:

***M6 – “I think they have tried to adjust, .....there is something missing I thing between the Senior Leadership something not quite gelling at the moment, I’ll be honest with you, I can ‘t put my finger on that, I am not sure whether it is a Leadership style, I don’t know whether it’s National issues, I don’t know whether it’s personality but there seems to be, to me the Command Group is not just sort of gelling as it right at the moment and I am not quite sure why that is, so yeah there is definitely something not quite working, is my observation.”***

So despite the leadership team appearing to be congratulating themselves their observers said little that validated meaningful change. Some of the managers’ comments were particularly focused on the mismatch between what leaders thought they were doing and how their behaviour appeared to others:

***M4 - “If you want certain behaviour then you have got to live by it, you know you can’t criticise staff for a lack of communication and be guilty of it yourself. The humility bit comes into that again, to say look I am aware of what our weaknesses are and we will jointly work on that, I get***

*that, but they have got to be in a position to do that, do as I do and do as I say.”*

There also appeared to be an issue with the way in which the members of the senior leadership team interacted with each other:

*M5 - “The relationships between the command group aren’t always productive and that’s because they are not having those, you know those professional behaviours that you expect, you must live by what you say because if you don’t it’s a credibility issue again.”*

One interviewee offered the opinion that the change in language, prompted by the culture change programme, actually had a detrimental effect on the organisation:

*M3 - “I hear them speaking a lot of good speak but it’s not believable and that actually makes the whole situation worse, it’s really that simple, there is a mismatch I think, personally, between, at JWC at the moment between what is being said and what is being done.”*

Others commented that they had not observed any discernible changes, either in the way that the senior leadership team perceived their role or on their actions:

*M7 - “I’m not really clear on what has changed from the Command perception. Being aware is not the same as acting on it.”*

Reassuringly some of the more enlightened leaders appeared to be conscious of this authenticity challenge with one remarking that:

*L1 - “It’s not just about walking the walk, it’s how we as leaders’ act, what shadow we cast..... I may be one of the people who has a stop gap between knowing it and living it.”*

In a similar revelation and contextualisation one leader revealed the importance of words matching deeds but then seemed to attribute the inability to act accordingly, to match the deed to the word, to the hierarchy:

*L8 – “You know it kind of goes back to words and deeds and actions you know right now if there is somebody out there may have a good idea on how to do something differently that creates a more positive environment, but that idea still has to be hierarchically endorsed and so there's a kind of a dichotomy of what we want to do, versus how we are organised or how we are comfortable with the organisation.”*

Many of those interviewed reported in one way or another we had an organisational issue regarding leaders being perceived as not “walking the talk”; according to the managers, what leaders were saying was not what was observed or experienced, what was being “espoused” was not that which was “in use” (Argyris, 2010). Following the completion of all interviews and now looking at all the data I was able to produce Appendix C – the Consolidated and Aggregated Interview Results. In order to summarise the individual responses in this Appendix, I produced Table 7 below. This table is a high-level amalgamation of the data and is used to introduce my interpretation of the rich picture, the “thick” description (Ponterotto and Grieger, 2007) of the things being reported from the 18 interviews. The white boxes in the table represent the questions that were raised through the interviews, the colour boxes represent other topics that emerged, informed the findings and subsequently redirected my further research and action.

CONSIDERATION	LEADERS	MANAGERS	ANALYSIS INTERPRETATION
<b>Affected my leadership</b>	Eight out of nine leaders reported they had changed their leadership approach.	Seven out of nine managers reported they had not changed their leadership approach.	The culture awareness programme aimed to provide the same process, information and experience to both groups (some sessions

			were even mixed) and yet very different responses coming through the interviewee's responses.
<b>Observed affect in the leadership of peers</b>	Eight out of nine leaders reported they had seen positive changes the leadership approach of their peers.	Only one manager reported a positive change in their peers.	The leaders reported they had changed their approach to peers, the managers indicated they had not. Why would a group just one managerial level lower not be affected when the layer above claims it had?
<b>Observed affect in the leadership of subordinates (if a leader)</b>	Only four noticed minor changes in the managers.	N/A	Most managers claimed that they had not changed and the leaders confirmed it. This seemed to be coherent.
<b>Observed affect in the leadership of seniors (if a manager)</b>	N/A	All nine stated that the leadership was worse than before.	All managers claimed that leadership at the layer above them had not improved. This seemed to be coherent.
<b>Affected the way I talk to people</b>	Eight out of nine leaders reported they had changed the way they communicated	Seven out of nine managers reported they had not changed the way	Patterns emerging of leaders claiming to have changed in other areas too, the

		they communicated.	managers reporting that they had not.
<b>Observed affect in the way others talk to each other</b>	Around 50% of leaders reported they had noticed changes in others.	Six out of nine reported they had not noticed changes in others.	Patterns emerging of leaders claiming to have changed in other areas too, the managers reporting that they had not.
<b>Knew it all from before</b>	Around half of the participants reported that they already knew the things that came up during the culture change process regarding leadership.		I did not ask a question about whether they knew it from before but many of them felt that they needed to tell me this was not new to them. Where I found this relevant is that despite claiming the “knowing” from before, still eight out of nine leaders claimed to have changed. It raised a question for me that if they knew it all from before why weren’t they acting on it?
<b>Themes emerging</b>	Various and seemingly individualised. Many talked about when they were “in	Several talked about “not walking the talk”. Some wanted more clarity and	The themes that did emerge did not do so with the regularity I was expecting; there are some themes that

	Command”. Some talked and bringing the “theory” to life.	direction. Others wanted more autonomy and freedom.	occurred often enough to be worthy of further investigation but only after the more prevalent “say/do” gap was investigated.
<b>Relationship with researcher</b>	Various and recorded.		I do not believe given the consistency in the data that my personal relationships with the interviewees significantly affected the results.

**Table 7 – Aggregated Data and Interpretation**

There appeared to be a significant delta between the leaders and managers with an apparent lack of consistency not only with how they saw the organisation, but also how they saw themselves within that organisation. It was this realisation and awakening that shaped the rest of my research and intervention. When one is perceived to act in ways that are contrary to how they say they act, we call that inauthentic, disingenuous or lacking in sincerity and this can influence significantly trust relationships in organisations. The same leaders espousing that JWC needed to be inclusive, innovative, supportive and accountable; their own created values (Appendix D), do not appear to be authentic and do not consequently have the trust of the people they were meant to lead; this perceived gap cannot have been helping the organisation develop at all. It was clear that working on one or two of the organisational themes that had been identified would not have the same impact or potential to create longer-term “Mode 2” (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008: 9) learning and development and enable a shift in the organisation in line with Figure 20.

### 5.1.13 Evolving the Methodology

It was clear to me that I not only needed to adapt my investigation and research but also my way of relating with the researched. Schön (1992: 54), describes the researching process as “artistic” in the way that research practitioners are required to interpret unique research contexts. He warns that rigour can be difficult to prove and advocates balancing the “technical rationality” of rigour with the “skilful performance of problem setting and judgement”. Striking that balance is said to open the door for researcher/practitioners to engage in the “swampy lowlands” where messy, confusing problems are said to be incapable of resolution through technical solutions (Ibid). A researcher/practitioner is often left with something of a dilemma; do they remain on the high ground, defined by relatively unimportant nebulous issues that are resolvable utilising “research-based theory and technique” or do they rather “descend into the swamp”; a complex messy area where important “wicked” (Churchman, 1967) issues solvable by arguably “non-rigorous inquiry” (Schön: 1992, 54). I considered myself to be working now deep inside our swamp.

I found myself to be not content with just trying to better understand our leadership and culture (a clear fit with ethnographic research), I also wanted to be part of taking that new understanding, even if just a small portion of the whole, and using it, evolving it. Cogenerating actionable knowledge in the moment that might have been lost in the more passive approach associated with ethnography. My own research had brought me deep into the swampy lowlands and I reflected long and hard on how to cultivate something useful for my organisation. It was clear to me that Phase 2 of the research was going to be different than Phase 1, more focussed upon outcomes and impact yet grounded fully and making sense of the research and analysis performed in Phase 1. Action research is a methodology where “both researchers and practitioners alike are engaged in creating *with* each other an ‘action guiding’ sense *from within* their lived and living experience of their shared circumstances.” (Shotter, 2006: 601).

### 5.1.14 Main Findings from Phase 1

As I reflected upon the interviews, the individual themes I had expected to emerge lost some of their relevance and I started to defocus and take a wider look at the data. Whilst the analysis and interpretation of the interviews did reveal that many of the cultural themes claimed to be associated with leadership in an effective organisation were important, that importance was not as widely reported as other topics disclosed. For example, within the literature review I learned about and expected to hear much more



about, the impact of national and service differences and the influences they can have in an organisation. This theme was disclosed as can be seen from two extracts below:

***L5 - “We are all coming from different cultures, I knew that but didn’t consider that it would be so challenging.”***

***L7 – “.....the importance about having a healthy culture in an organisation and how that relates to how individuals are trying to be sensible, trying to behave properly, even though there are from birth cultural differences.”***

It is a subject that I have found to be almost ‘off limits’ for discussion in international organisation like ours, but the reality is that staff become aware of service influences and national influences too late in their tour to be able to adapt with many deciding that change is all too difficult:

***M4 – “.....we don’t change the style of information or the style of leadership when we change from National business to NATO business”***

And on the subject of service influences one of the interviewees stated:

***M8 - “I already have my Marine Corp ethos. We try to hold ourselves to a different leadership standard than any other services.”***

Four of the 18 interviewees mentioning this was not the response I had anticipated and I had expected the themes that the literature and my own analysis had predicted to be more widely expressed. What was instead expressed, and what became so obvious once it had been identified, was the much more prevalent diversion in views of leaders contrasted with the managers. This is exposed in the three examples below:

- Leaders claimed that a new organisational language had evolved, that they were communicating differently, listening more intently; yet the managers reported that this was not the case.
- Several of the leaders stated that they had learned nothing new whilst going through the organisational culture awareness process and yet at the same time each of those leaders claimed to have changed. So if they knew it, why weren't they living it?
- Despite the leaders for the most part claiming to have changed almost every Branch Head (manager) stated that they had seen no change at all in the leaders with several stating that things had become worse.

That these rather different perspectives were repeated with some consistency across the leader/manager interviews came as a surprise to me. It was beginning to become increasingly clear that the leaders and managers had a rather different and yet, from their level, a fairly consistent view of leadership behaviours. In terms of changes in leadership behaviours, the leaders claimed that they had, in some way, changed their leadership through the culture-shaping process; the people they managed saw little of this with many claiming that it had actually got worse. Most noticeable when contrasting the general perspectives, the high-levels views from the leaders and managers, which is apparent in Appendix C and is summarised in Table 8 below:

	Affected my leadership	Observed leadership change in peers	Observed leadership change in leaders (if a manager) or managers (if a leader)	Affected my language	Observed language change in peers	Observed language change in leaders (if a manager) or managers (if a leader)
L						
E						
A						
D						
E						
R						
S						
M						
A						
N						
A						
G						
E						
R						
S						
<div> <div></div> Considered leadership &amp; culture change positively           <div></div> Considered leadership &amp; culture change negatively           <div></div> Indifferent or undeterminable         </div>						

**Table 8 – High-Level Views**

This colour coded snapshot reveals the dissonance between the leaders who almost exclusively thought that the changes were positive and the managers who were equally convinced that things had become worse. There was a significant gap between what was being said by the command group, the leaders, compared with what was being observed by the branch heads, their managers, and the emergence of these apparent gaps resulted in my second significant literature review. As this more general, meta-theme emerged I started to investigate the literature regarding “say/do” gaps. This literature helped me to understand better the phenomenon which in turn sent me back into the literature to investigate authenticity in leadership. That eventually led to the authentic leadership development intervention, reported in the story part 2 to follow, that was designed to enable new leadership practices to emerge.

#### 5.1.15 Summary

It is sometimes claimed that organisational research can be less about discovering anything new but rather understanding something that is already there “in plain view” (Shotter, 2006: 589) but is not yet articulated, described or conveyed. Whilst my research, following a more ethnographic approach initially, revealed a number of interesting dichotomies, it did not help to explain them nor solve them. I felt that researching the emerging more general topics, rather than the original themes I was expecting to find, might have a greater benefit to the organisation, and the individuals in it. Bell and Thorpe (2013: 142) provide an adequate warning of the “messy, serendipitous and unpredictable” nature of management research but still, the realisation that something else was going on in addition to what I was looking to find, struck me by surprise. It was an awareness that came from “being prepared to catch a glimpse of such new possibilities” whilst at the same time resisting the temptation for “seeking explanations, conducting analyses, offering interpretations, or formulating hypotheses” (Shotter, 2010: 279). I continued to review the data a second time to verify whether these “glimpses” were more than a localised snapshot or representative of something more prevalent. My initial research position, informed through a number of staff surveys and my own lived experience of my context created an understanding in me that leadership and culture are both influenced by or appraisable on the assessment of a number of organisational themes. My understanding was found to be incomplete. I anticipated the disclosure of a number of key themes to be revealed that would help me to co-create a systematically generated organisational improvement plan and while I continue to believe that there would be merit in addressing some of these themes, there was a more compelling phenomenon revealed. Table 8 shows the aggregated dissonance between the leaders and the managers in regard to how they considered leadership development through the organisational culture awareness program. What seemed clear is that the leaders felt that things had got better, that they had changed at their level; the managers, on the other hand, felt things were worse and that they had not experienced a change in the organisation nor themselves.

Action research is often associated with some uncertainty and “fuzziness” (Coghlan and Brannick, 2010: 144), the journey away from fuzziness to clarity (see Figure 22) is achieved through “spirals of action research cycles.” (Ibid: 146). McKay and Marshall (2001: 69) indicate that at its core, action research is “research enabled problem solving”, performed through “two separate but interconnected and interacting cycles”. My own cyclical journey is

based on the model presented in the methodology Chapter from McKay and Marshall and adapted to my own context as shown in Figure 26 later in this Chapter.

#### *5.1.15.1 Logical Process Description*

Interpreting Figure 26 (p.123) involves appreciating that the logical flow as depicted by the numbers and indicated by the use of the solid lines; some baselining was performed (1), it triggers a research question regarding culture and leadership (2), that sends me into the literature (3.1, 3.2 and 3.3), that inform my own understanding, my methodology, interviews and analysis (4), that provides evidence of some themes emerging but not the ones I had anticipated from earlier baselining (1), that made me reflect and then adapt my interviews, analysis and reflections (6), that led to the emergence of a more prevalent dissonance (7) sending me back into the literature on the sources of perception gaps (8.1) and leadership authenticity (8.2) culminated in the authentic leadership development interventions (9) that were designed for individual and organisational development that would impact the new baselines (10) that closes this action research feedback loop.

#### *5.1.15.2 Temporal Process Description*

Although depicted in detail across a timeline in Figure 21 (p.96) the reality was rather less structured. Temporally researching leadership and culture were not disassociated, as I refer to in the literature leadership and culture are closely related; “two sides of the same coin” according to Schein (2010: 3). Hence when I was researching leadership, organisational culture was always there, and when I was researching organisational culture, I was regularly also learning about leadership. Consequently, it was not possible to decompose this research so that the logical and temporal flows were consistent. Instead, significant amount of time was spent tracking back (as shown through the dotted lines) where new information was reflected upon, researched and acted upon; sometimes “in the moment” as a reflexive iteration akin to a personal awakening and at other times following a more intentional engagement with the academic literature.

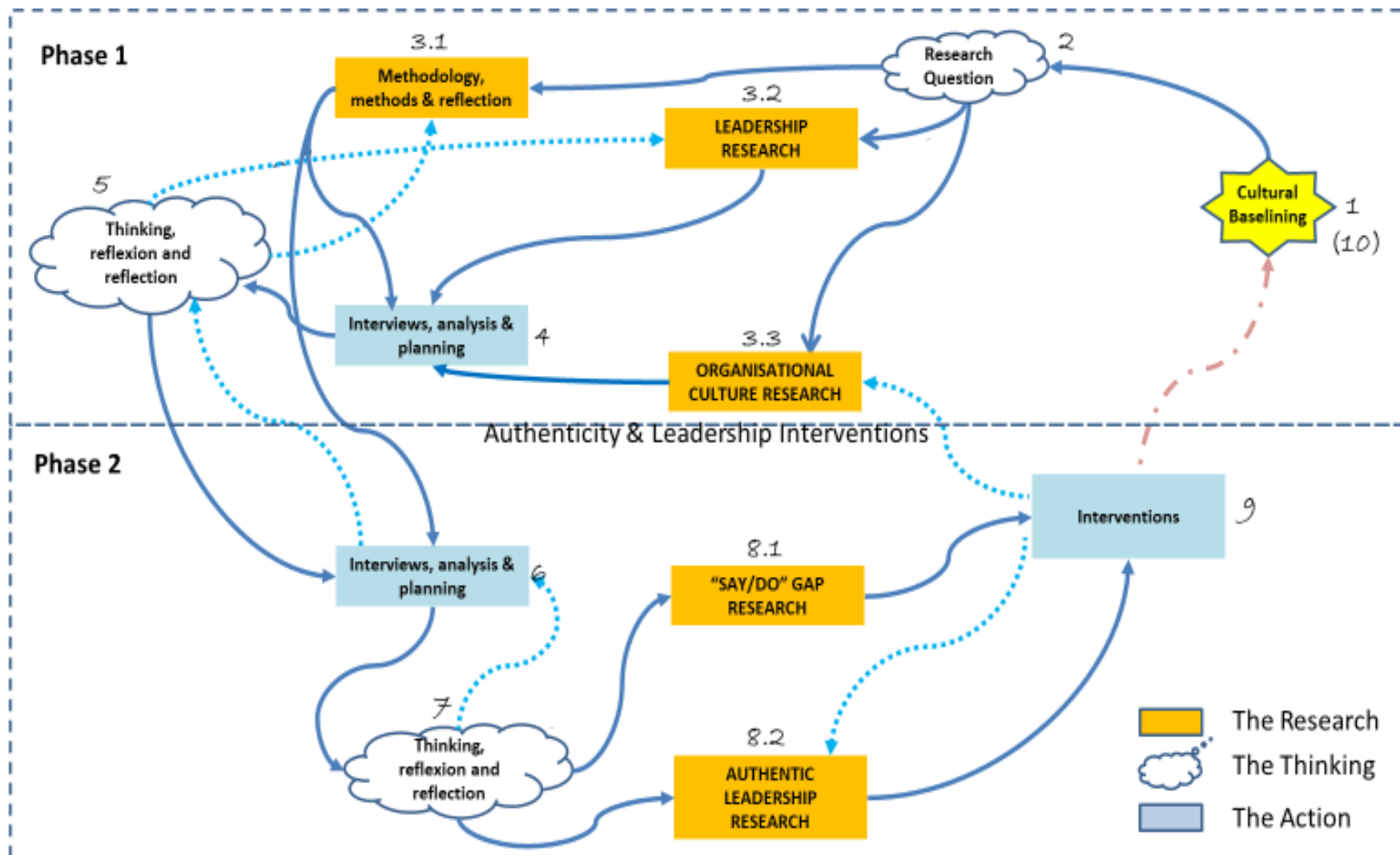


Figure 26 - Action Research Process Model adapted from McKay and Marshall (2001).

In story part 2 I reveal the how the discoveries from part 1 informed a new stream of leadership research that culminated in the development of interventions designed to address some aspects of leadership that were revealed as potentially limiting our organisational effectiveness. Story part 2 is more strongly associated with the planned and intentional “action” of action research and provides evidence of the bridge I tried to create from research theory to practical relevance. New literature is included as the story unfolds.

## 5.2 Story Part 2

In trying to decide upon an action research intervention I took note of Argyris (1976: 370) statement that double loop learning won’t come from “lectures, reading or case studies” as this will only promote change at an “espoused” level and not at the “in-use” level. And when the success of these leaders over their years has been down in part to these embedded “in-use” theories then unlocking them becomes problematic. Challenging the norm, discarding standard practices and diverting regimented processes is not a feature of C<sup>2</sup> and yet this is the very behaviour required for double loop learning to occur (Ibid). Action research is said to enable the development of “practices” (Susman and Evered, 1978: 599) that are claimed to provide the researcher “with know-how such as how to create settings for organisational learning, how to act in un-prescribed non-programmed situations, how to generate organisational self-help, how to establish action guides where none exist”. Practices provide the researcher with the wherewithal to create organisational learning vignettes, scenarios and experiences.

### 5.2.1 Preparing the Intervention

I went back into the literature and relate that second phase of review in Chapter 2 to investigate the phenomena repeatedly raised by the Branch Heads that although Command Group had espoused changes in their leadership that change was not observed or demonstrated to the managers. Argyris and Schön (1974), Avolio et al., (2004) and George et al., (2011) all describe “espoused” and “in use” theory in detail and explain how, in an organisation, leaders can be unaware that they are being considered somehow inauthentic.

According to Dijkstra and Van Eijnatten (2005: 40), a theory of action is based upon “practice-directed research” with three main requirements:

- A description of the current reality (where are we now – the reality as described by the interviewees).
- A preferred new “reality” based upon some solutions.

- A description of the actions possible to close the gap between these “realities”.

Cadle et al. (2004) provided me with an insight that would help me develop the interventions first stage, by using my own experiential leadership life story, exposing my own learning and vulnerabilities; I would hopefully encourage them to do the same. By modelling new ways of behaving, of action, change can be generated in the moments of conscious connection between current contexts and previously leadership behaviours. These moments offer “uniquely new beginnings for genuinely innovative changes” (Shotter, 2010: 273). Avolio and Gardner (2005: 320) say, “one’s sincerity is therefore judged by the extent to which the self is represented accurately and honestly to others, rather than the extent to which one is true to self” and representing self, requires that one first truly understands oneself.

### 5.2.2 Intervention Format

Jackson and Parry (2010: 139), when talking about approaches to leadership development, state that “mixing short ‘featurettes’ and small-group and large-group discussions” provides a learning platform that works well with adults (Meier, 2000). Shotter and Cunliffe (2003, 17) also reinforce the use of peer relational vignettes stating that “meanings are created in the spontaneous coordinated interplay of peoples responsive relations to each other”. They go on to claim that it is possible to reframe leaders thinking in the moment when meaning is reflected upon and rewritten “seamlessly, almost simultaneously as a work of “practical authorship” where meaning is “created in a relationally responsive way” (Ibid: 19).

Senior leaders and managers in my organisation are not usually very forthcoming about exposing their doubts or weaknesses, years of training in a hard organisation has seen to that. The data I collected through the surveys and interviews though showed me over and over again that they are however deeply respectful of other leaders and managers (see graphs Figure 25). It occurred to me that the best way to have leaders reflect is for them to do so in a trusted peer group. In research terms I realised that the right person asking the right questions is critical and at least as important as finding the ‘right’ answer” (Antonacopoulou, 2009: 428; Berger, 2014; Grint, 2008; Marquardt, 2014) and this appears to be especially the case when senior leaders are to be encouraged to examine their own leadership history and development. Who does the asking is also a factor as I discovered.



George et al., (2011: 172) identify a number of questions to help leaders rediscover or reconnect to their authentic selves and I used one of these as I considered an action intervention within my practice; “Which people and experiences in your early life had the greatest impact on you”. Sparrowe on the other hand (2005: 447) proposes that re-exposure can be created through a reflection upon “three stories of when I was at my best”. Using Shamir and Eilam’s (2005: 412) “guided reflection” I prepared sessions where they were encouraged to identify, expose, reflect and revalidate their leadership story and I describe that in more detail below.

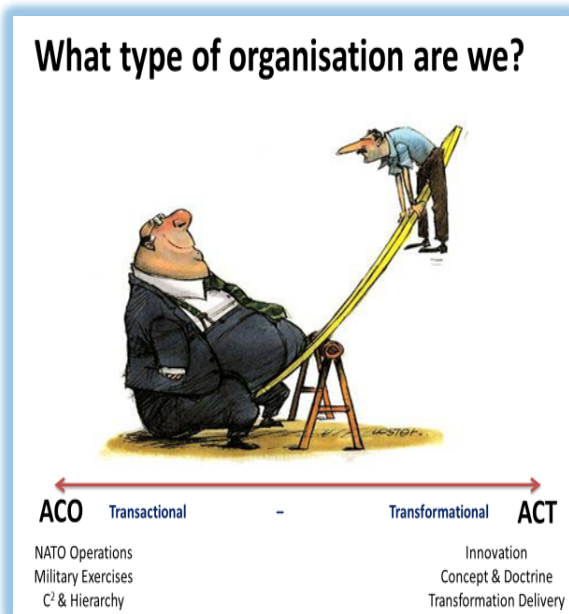
### 5.2.3 Authentic Leadership Development Process

Action researchers “assume that specific historical interests drive current social practices” (Ozanne and Saatcioglu, 2008: 425) and since leadership is a social practice, it is not a far stretch to link current leadership practices with specific historical leadership experiences. Action research is about researching the historically informed present with a purposeful eye towards a better future (Coghlan and Holian, 2015: 6). Military leaders are, through training and selection, action-oriented problem solvers, and as Shamir and Eilam (2005) point out action-oriented leaders tend not to display reflexive attributes. I wanted to encourage these proud, mature “leaders” to be ready to tell their leadership “life-story” and furthermore for it to be discussed and challenged; to create an environment where at least reflection could occur. According to Shamir and Eilam (2005: 410) “life stories are continuously constructed and revised, the ‘lessons of experience’ can be learned not only close to the experience but also much later.” Alongside these historically bounded way points I also wanted them to become better connected with the present, the “here and now” leadership environment and so I asked them to reflect upon and describe to others our context, and to consider how this matched or not what they have experienced before. I did so by exposing them to and discussing slides that are shown later in this Chapter.

In first stepping through the vignettes using a critical look my own leadership development over many years I modelled the behaviours that I would later ask of them, to reflect upon the circumstances of their own leadership story and to do so from fresh eyes, as a disconnected observer wanting to understand even more about “then and there” and how that might inform the “here and now”. I encouraged them to discuss leadership and even to consider what would ideal leadership for our context look like. They explored these factors in detail; what leadership was, and what it was not; contrasted transactional and transformational and asked them to discuss where would we be if this was a scale. I acted only as a facilitator through the reflection in order for it to be as non-threatening as possible for them to be open and authentic. I

engineered the space for them to create an atmosphere of mutual trust and openness in order to “find an ‘internal compass’ and become more authentic leaders” (Shamir and Eilam, 2005: 412). This, and demonstrations like this, helped the JWC Commander to lead, while I facilitated, staff workshops and leadership development sessions.

#### 5.2.4 Authentic Leadership Development Prompts



#### Creating the context – asking the question (Marquardt, 2005)

I wanted the group to consider where we would normally exist on a transactional – transformational scale aware that our customer is ACO and our senior HQ is ACT charged with very different missions. The consensus was that we would need to be able to adjust. I then asked them to think about what style of leadership may support that operating mode most effectively.

#### Step 1. Small featurettes and group discussions (Susman and Evered, 1978)

I asked the group to discuss in pairs whether they felt that leaders are born or made. Then we shared as a group. I then introduced the slide on the left as some data revealing that up to 70% of a leader’s ability to lead come from experience. The slide then builds to talk about what drives our behaviours and also posits the question are we still “works in progress” as far as leadership is concerned?



### Your Leadership Story



Imagine a timeline that captures your leadership story.

Think back quietly for a few moment and recall some of the key events that shaped who you are as a leader today? Mark on these on the template - give them a name

Reflect upon those events individually

How did they inform and shape your leadership development

How do these experiences help you lead today

Write down some of the words that come to mind

### In groups of 3 discuss.....

- What key experiences influenced your leadership tendencies?
- When were your most fulfilling leadership moments?
- What really helps you lead in your current context?
- What might get in the way?

### *Step 2. Self-exposure and open mindedness (Gardner et al., 2005)*

I then use my own leadership story to show how events shaped me, and how some of the learning from those events was very useful at the time but other things I have unconsciously continued to do might get in the way of me being an even more effective leader. Reminding them of the values they created I then asked them to do the same, to reflect on key moments in their development that informs their leadership today.

### *Step 3. Iterative critical thinking and Empathy cycles (Berkovich, 2014)*

Using the prompting questions on the slide to the left I asked them to share their stories with the person next to them. To think deeply and describe the occasions and what happened, what it meant to them and how going through those times informed their leadership. Then the people would stop as the sharer and become the listener. As these discussions started to tail off I then brought the group together and invited them to share more openly. For “homework” I asked them to think about what they now recalled, was still relevant or might it be getting in the way.



*Step 4. Self-exposure (me), care and contact, self-exposure (them) (McCauley et al., 2006)*

Finally, and within a “mode 2” (Huff and Huff, 2001) learning environment I asked them to consider their leadership contribution and legacy. I ask them to consider a timeframe much longer than the two or three years they will stay at the JWC. I ask them to take stock of how they would be remembered now, and how they might prefer to be remembered. I then provide them with a call to action to encourage new behaviours to start to evolve.

In creating a process, I utilised the work introduced in Chapter 4 of George et al., (2011), Sparrowe (2005) and Shamir and Eilam (2005) to develop a guided reflection phase. In that phase, I encouraged them to identify, expose and revalidate their leadership story. Many were incredibly proud of their days as company or battalion commanders and found it very easy to bring these to mind; these were profound departure points from which to continue the exploration. “Knowing their authentic selves requires the courage and honesty to open up and examine their experiences” (George et al., 2011: 168). It requires personal humility and the willingness to feel vulnerability, to be ready to see a reflection in a “mirror” that they may not like to see, to hear uncomfortable feedback that may expose them to addressing safety mechanisms they were unaware of and that have kept them safe (Argyris, 2010).

### 5.2.5 Authentic Leadership Programme Delivery

As a response to the activities performed prior to, and during, the research period, the Commander of the JWC decided to run developmental sessions of his key personnel. Consequently, bi-annual group sessions at the levels of Command Group and Branch Heads

(termed the “leaders” and “managers” respectively in this thesis) were held. These sessions were attended by 20 or so each time and lasted two days; the first half of day one facilitated a review of where we were (utilising feedback I provided on the interpretations of the research so far (Appendix C) and the organisational heatmap (Appendix B), the last half of day two being a consolidation and look ahead to the next six months. That provided me two half days to engage these groups in an authentic leadership development intervention previously described in 5.2.4. Groups would be organised in a “horseshoe” seating arrangement where no desks were present. Seating would be random (although I never saw the Chief of Staff not sit next to the Commander) and during the reflection parts (step one leading to step 2) I would have some low subtle music playing in the background. I would look for signs of readiness in the group for them to move on and when most looked ready I would turn down the music to silent and invite them to share their thinking in a one – one setting (step 3). This would take all of the afternoon of the first day as the group sharing that followed always created a rich discussion. At the end of day one I would ask them to think about their past leadership story and what that means for the future.

During the morning of day two the participants were first asked in a group setting if they had discovered anything new, either during the session the day before, or as a consequence of their reflections at home. Without exception, people shared their new insights providing me with a platform to proceed to step four. This step was again worked through one – one and then group shared, at the end of this step I asked them to write down on a paper what they would commit to doing differently from then on, as far as I could see everyone had written something to themselves.

### 5.2.6 Authentic Leadership Development Impact and Outcomes

A broad-spectrum reflection on the legacy of the thesis is described in Chapter 7 yet at this point, as the story of the leadership interventions conclude, I wanted to pause and look the impact and outcomes for the organisation, and some of those working within it; looking first internally and then externally to the JWC. As a reminder at the outset of the research, I stated that this research would be focussed on the delivery of outcomes of this action research investigation could be considered along three lines of development:

- to co-create the conditions for leadership development in my organisation (internal to JWC)

- to bring about organisational development through the research process (internal to JWC)
- to contribute to actionable knowledge that may be beneficial for leaders and managers in similar organisations considering organisational change (external to JWC)

#### *5.2.6.1 Internal Within JWC*

The authentic leadership and organisational culture alignment process is now part of a wider activity that is detailed in the JWC's "One Team Organisational Culture Plan" (Kucukaksoy, 2015), and the JWC has the only successful NATO Organisational Culture program to date (Fenning; 2017). So it seems that the research performed left the JWC with a development plan that others have improved upon and that is now enshrined in policy and embedded in the organisation (Sewell, 2016). The JWC now has its own ability to survey across the organisation and compare consistently; I created the initial survey during the DBA period and that survey evolved further through the thesis period. I included this as Appendix A. This provides the JWC with the ability to produce an annual organisational heatmap (see Appendix B) that allows the organisation to look into specific areas, by Branch (the level of my managers in the thesis), of focus across the mission, structure and culture domains. Table 9 below shows the JWC heatmap that shows how specific parts of the organisation are faring against organisational themes and how they compare with other functional areas allowing the organisations to learn from stronger performing areas and identifying areas of weakness to inform future organisational development activities.





knowledge. The organisational development officer, Mr Paul Sewell, continues to run sessions and write articles for a process that is now embedded within the JWC (Sewell, 2017).

#### *5.2.6.2 External to the JWC*

It is clear to me that impacts generated from within this action research may not be reproducible in another setting, they are uniquely bound within the context comprising the researcher, the research and the ever-changing environment in which they all operate. That being said two other ACT commands have recently embarked upon an organisational development initiative and both the NATO Joint Analysis and Lessons Learned Centre (JALLC) and the NATO Joint Force Training Centre (JFTC) are looking to follow the same process I developed during my research period and influenced strongly through my DBA learning. They have asked to use the surveys, create heatmaps and have suggested that the authentic leadership development sessions I developed become part of their team building and engagement strategy.

Externally some of my work has also created some high-level attention. In 2014 (informed from my DBA studies) I recommended that NATO HQ sponsor a NATO-wide organisational culture assessment and in the 2016/2017 academic year for the NATO Executive Development programme (NEDP) a cohort was given a group project to review all NATO organisational culture initiatives. This cohort was tasked to make an assessment through this 9-month programme of their validity, success rate and come up with a set of recommendations for all NATO bodies that was presented to a wide audience at NATO HQ in Brussels. In that report (Fenning et al., 2017), the point is made that the JWC has the only successfully integrated organisational culture change that is embedded into organisational learning. It also points out that this was an example of a “bottom-up” change programme with a former NEDP participant; that person is me and the report that came from this 9-month group work provided as a culture change process that was presented to the Secretary General for consideration for use across all NATO. Three extracts from the “Towards One NATO: Culture Matters” (Fenning, 2017) confirming the impact and my part in that are shown below:



#### 4.4.5 JWC

##### *'One Team' Culture Change Program, 2013 to Date*

Since January 2013 the Joint Warfare Centre (JWC) has been on a journey to implement a culture change programme that aimed to shape a healthier, high performing culture enabling it to be effective in serving NATO. The programme was initially inspired by a JWC staff member who participated in the NATO Executive Development Programme (NEDP) and is an example of bottom-up initiative. The JWC's One Team programme is now embedded into the organization and has shown to be a successful enabler and integrator of the staff in their cross-divisional teams. Additionally an annual plan is produced for the JWC to continue ongoing proactive team development to be more innovative and responsive to its mission.

We have had many important contributions from those who have been involved in culture change programs either currently, or in the past and we would like to thank them for their honesty in their interviews and continued dedication to culture change in NATO: Garry Hargreaves (NCIA/JWC), Paul Sewell (JWC), LTC Maurizio Moscato (SHAPE), Matt Hanson, Duncan Thomson, Neil McMullin (HQ SACT); Wayne J. Bush, Patrice Billaud-Durand, Céline Shakouri-Dias, Arina Danila (NATO HQ).

A two-day leadership offsite session with the culture change team was dedicated to exploring the results of the survey. From this session the 'One Team' tag line for the culture change programme was developed. In addition, dysfunctional behaviours that were sought to be changed were identified. These cultural elements of dysfunctional behaviours included: silo mentality, bureaucracy, hierarchy and resistance to change. These were communicated and branded to the staff as the 'Jaws of culture' eating into JWCs effectiveness and efficiency. Physical, tangible reminders of the tag line were developed to inspire staff, including a logo and a motto "JWC one team – a powerful model for success".



Figure 3 - JWC Logo communicates its values

Extracts from “Towards one NATO: Culture Matters” (Fenning et al., 2017)

Relating outcomes to a specific intervention is clearly subjective and using this analysis to derive specific interventions is controversial. Consequently, I will really never know with any degree of certainty if the interventions were the catalyst for change. Yet some evidence exists to link outcomes and change to the authentic leadership development process. I include a number of quotes below that come from Appendix C in regard to the question regarding any personal effect on leadership as a consequence of the leadership development process. One of leaders stated that the leadership interventions were important and indicated the relevance of working with the most senior team:

*L1 - “One of the most significant things we’ve done……senior leadership buy-in is vital.”*

Others expressed personal change to include aspects like slowing down, taking the pace off the frantic workload, they indicted a more reflective state of being.

*L2 - “Yes, purposeful listening, slowing down to understand.”*

*L3 – “Yes, it left an imprint and I probably have changed my behaviours.”*

*L5 – “I think I'm now better in adapting to my counterparts.”*

*L6 – “I try to do things a little bit differently.”*

*L8 – “Yes, I try and use all the tools, methods, good practice we have learned”.*

*L9 – “I hope it affected me. Personally, it has made me who I am here, walking the corridors. Getting around and talking to people.”*

The managers were not so sure with many saying that their leadership had not changed. Two exceptions were noted though with one indicating they were heard more and the others stating that they had seen leadership changes at a personal level:

*M1 – “Yes -allowing non-native speakers to lead.”*

*M6 – “Yes, on a personal front.”*

Clearly, there were other influences at play that were impacting their experiences fuelling this leader/manager gap that I was trying to enable them to close and for some, this did appear impactful.

For example, although most of the leaders were fairly sceptical in the beginning there was a significant shift as the sessions evolved for most of the participants in the workshops, with one of the leaders telling me that for the first time in his experience at the JWC they “**felt like a band of brothers**”, I come back to that “band” later in the thesis. Still, there were others who openly stated that they were at the end of their career and too old to change now, they participated but it seemed they did so under duress, they appeared to be somewhat trapped.

Argyris (2010) claims to take the journey to avoid “traps” means eliminating “the pathologies associated with formal hierarchy” pathologies that “perpetuate power disparities, and that undermine the self-worth of those who have little formal power.” By developing authenticity in leaders, it seems that power is something that will feature less and less within transformational organisations (Abrashoff, 2002). Its application carefully considered rather than being a constant feature of organisational life, after all, some feel that “Power over others is weakness disguised as strength” (Tolle, 1997), and so many of the leaders I asked revealed that their leadership high point was coincidental with the moments when they had the most power. It seems only the most senior or enlightened officers realised the irony in that “the more power one accumulates, the less it should be used” (George and Sims, 2001).

It is equally difficult to attribute personal changes in leadership behaviour to one moment or another but what was clear is that these sessions become valued. I was asked to also include them in sessions with other staff members at all levels of the organisation and so every three months or so another group of twenty would go through this exercise. Anecdotally, through feedback from some of the staff, I knew well in JWC it appeared that some of the leaders did appear to follow what they had written in step 4 (5.2.4) of the authentic leadership development process. Some had even reminders on their office walls. For others though, behavioural changes, if they were there at all, went unnoticed. Reassuringly however, was a posting from one of the leaders who was not interviewed as he joined later but who did participate in the

authentic leadership development sessions entered the following unsolicited input on my “Linkedin” profile.

*“Garry’s planning and implementation of the comprehensive, multi-year transformation of JWC’s international organisation serves as a case study in change leadership. Garry studied the team’s identified shortfalls and found root causes; he explored and analyzed multiple courses of action to organisationally solve those issues; he proactively and rigorously communicated his progress, incorporating feedback from all echelons every step of the way; he implemented the final plan in a way that facilitated physical, hierarchical, emotional, and professional transitions with minimal disruptions to the organisation’s mission and effectiveness and to our individuals’ abilities to contribute and to derive satisfaction from their work. I treasure my notes from experiencing this process first hand and will replicate Garry’s methods and style when leading change in the future.”*

Organisationally the JWC continues to welcome newcomers with organisational culture and leadership briefings and workshops that set from day one of a tour the framework under which these new leaders and managers will operate. They pay specific attention to the leadership behaviours that should be associated with the JWC values (Appendix D) and annually leadership related questions are included in the all staff survey. This survey is used to set the direction of the organisational improvement plan that my research instigated, but more importantly, that continues to run even though I left the organisation (Sewell, 2017). Only recently the Chief of Staff of Allied Command Transformation wrote a testimony to the outcomes of my research and organisational development activities.

Outside of the JWC others noticed what was occurring and I was asked to not only perform these authentic leadership development sessions in our higher command at ACT, but also to teach this subject on the NATO executive development program (Morrone, 2016). I have also been asked to develop a week-long module for a new NATO Academy being constructed which will, for the first time, try and expose military leaders to multinational military leadership as a transfer of knowledge rather than just a transfer through experience.

My most recent evidence of outcomes came from a testimonial that Air Marshall Sir Graham Stacey KBE provided as a “To whom it may concern” letter, it reads:

*“It is my pleasure to forward a statement regarding impact and legacy associated with Garry's organisational research that was performed with NATO ACT over a 4 year period from 2013 to 2017.*

*Whilst his choice of DBA thesis was not influenced, nor sponsored by, NATO, Garry continually delivered learning into the organisation throughout this period; sharing academic knowledge translating that into organisational and personal change interventions.*

*He led a major organisation culture change project within my organisation and developed, and then executed, team and leadership development sessions that, to date, hundreds of staff have benefitted from and will continue to benefit from.*

*I have personally experienced his ability to engage on the subjects of leadership and culture at major conferences where he never fails to provoke new thinking in senior audiences. His collaborative interventions based on solid academic groundings provided a strong legacy which has had organisation-wide influence; his authentic leadership and organisational culture awareness sessions were also embedded in NATO's executive development program.*

*I was delighted to have been able to provide Garry with a platform to practice his knowledge and impressed with the organisational results that continue to be delivered.”*

## Chapter 6 - PERSONAL REFLECTION

In this Chapter, I disclose my personal learning journey and position myself in and alongside the research. I explain my relationship to the research, express my motivations, fears and disclose the many open questions that still remain. I reflect critically on how I developed as a researching practitioner, a scholarly leader. I move on to look at those my research somehow affected and explain how my research unfolded in ways that I had not initially considered, where joint production (Frankham and Howes, 2007: 628) became a critical component of the research and the action. Action research is about sensitive but purposeful movement across the insider/outsider continuum, it is about tempering active involvement with reflexivity and integrity. Above all, as I discovered, it is about balance (Greenwood and Levin, 2007: 65); balance around illuminating and then working through paradox (Broussine and Vince, 1996; Luscher and Lewis, 2008) and balance regarding the translation and connection of theory with the reality of practice. Indeed it was the intention of bridging the rigour – relevance gap that attracted me initially to the DBA programme and observing the impact of translating academic knowledge into something useful, something “interesting” (Bartunek et al., 2006) for my practice. From my perspective I have come to appreciate that action research can be considered as a kind of service, it is about the translation and integration of academic knowledge to be made digestible for busy executives who might never have the energy nor time to wade through an academic paper (Bartunek et al., 2006).

“Why should anyone who has not been involved directly in my research be interested in it?” prompts Coghlan and Brannick (2010: 149) to ask of oneself. An action researcher then needs not only to ensure that the research is of interest, that it is relevant, but also that it is practical and by ensuring that these three aspects are considered, a connection between research and relevance can be achieved. This Chapter then describes my research journey from an objective stance as “looking in on” to more subjective and participative approach characterised by “being part of” (Anderson et al., 2015). Brannick and Coghlan, (2010: 5) paint a picture of action research as an integrative, iterative process that encapsulates “three voices and audiences”; they go on to relate these as first, second and third person. Action research could be considered then as being concerned with research for me (as a learner), for us (other leaders in my practice and me) and for them (my organisation and beyond) and it is with this in mind that I reflect further in this Chapter.

## 6.1 First Person Related

### 6.1.1 Who am I as a Researcher?

Antonacopoulou (2010: 219) suggest that engaging in “reflexive critique” is a distinctive attribute of practice-based researchers and it is with this in mind that I now reflect upon my own reflexive learning, things that came to mind uninvited but affected me in the moment when they did; and I also record my conscious reflections as I look back on almost eight years of study. I expose my own challenges in identity and the constant dilemma of being deeply intimate and part of the context I was researching, to being a curious observer being disconnected from the researched. In this Chapter, I try to reveal how I needed to consider my own “personalities”; as an employee, a researcher and perhaps even an “internal consultant” (Coghlan and Casey, 2001).

My formal role was one as the head of an IT planning team working on providing technical solutions to user requirements within a training centre. As a side effect of carrying out my research, I was asked to perform in a newly created role as the head of an “organisational development team” that was tasked with planning and then implementing a major restructuring and realignment of the JWC. Whilst I was unable to decide whether this was a punishment or reward it does highlight that insider action researching may have unforeseen consequences (Moore, 2007). My research then was performed as an “insider”, embedded into the organisation where my formal role had very little to do with the research topic. My research was a somewhat selfish initiative to see if I could I could test myself at the highest level. I often wonder if it was all worth it, as a mature student approaching 50 when I started, completely self-funded and with no hope of recovering my personal financial investment, I wonder if the strains it placed upon my family were reasonable. Certainly my projected timeframes were a gross underestimation and I wonder what I will make of this in five or ten years’ time. I did it for me, but the price was not only mine to bear, I did not appreciate enough, despite the warnings from the University before embarking upon this journey, that I was also signing my friends and family up to a long-term disturbance too.

### 6.1.2 My Research Period Life Context

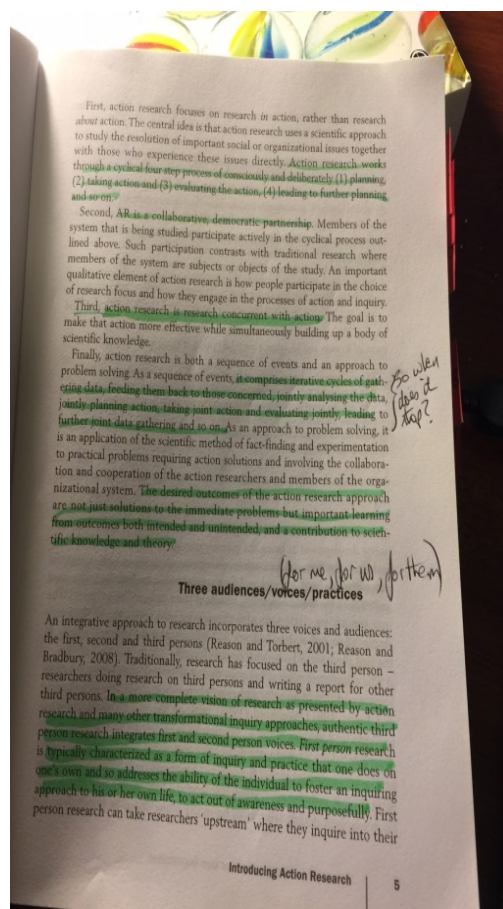
I have no intention of dwelling unnecessarily of the circumstances of my personal life but I do need to record a sense of what the DBA and thesis demanded of me and my significant others as I went through the process. My initial estimates regarding how long the thesis research and writing would take were woefully inadequate. The change of approach from having multiple and phased deadlines as part of the taught modules and the requirement to self-motivate also took me by surprise. Indeed, I had several very low points where I considered giving it all up; I recall reading that it might be possible to stop within the thesis stage and receive an MBA and I was very close to trying to exercise that option a number of times. Just to put that into context I joined the UK Royal Navy in 1978 and have never given up on anything before, never been close. Two self-study degrees (one at Masters level), various physically and mentally challenging times in the forces, transitioning into civilian life, and never felt the palpable desire to give in before, but I did within the thesis period, more than once. In this time, I also went through a job change, opting for a serious cut in salary and increased workload. I went through two moves to different countries altogether and my wife being within hours of dying due to peritonitis after she had been operated on for colon cancer.

The thesis took a very serious amount of effort and in all honesty, had I known what I was letting myself in for in 2010 I would not have applied. Now that I am approaching the end and can see light at the end of the tunnel I feel better able to convince myself I did the right thing but that doesn't stay for long. A DBA is a very demanding route and the spill over regarding the time I had with friends and family continues to haunt me from time to time, and as I mentioned before, does it really ever end? I should perhaps also have paid a little more attention to Jackson and Parry's (2010: 150) warning that researching leadership is like a lifelong apprenticeship, explaining that "in academe, the apprenticeship is effectively a life sentence because you can never truly master your subject – especially when it is something as nebulous, as contestable, and as fascinating as leadership." I wonder whether the action research activities that I found myself initiating and embedded into will really have an end.



### 6.1.3 When Will It Stop?

As I was performing the literature review for action research I was reminded of a book I had read many months early in the early stages of my research activities. In that book (Brannick and Coghlan, 2010) is a text describing action research that reads “it comprises of iterative cycles of gathering data, feeding them back to those concerned, jointly analysing the data, jointly planning action, taking joint action and evaluating jointly, leading to further joint data gathering...”) (Ibid:5). At the side of the page, I had scribbled “So when does it stop?” I had no idea at that time that this question would still be in my mind 6½ years later and still being as relevant as it was then. Once you have embarked upon an action research journey stopping does seem rather difficult, at least it does in my case.



### 6.1.4 Come To Think Of It, When Did It Start?

If knowing when to stop was challenging, trying to work out where the actions and interventions started was harder still. Frankham and Howes (2007: 620) make the point that the “action” already starts during the setting up and planning phases of a research project; that even during supposed observational activities the organisation was already shifting. This was especially apparent during the interviews or during follow-on discussions thereafter. I certainly did not anticipate where the research would end up, I did not predict accurately all the themes before they emerged but I did expect there to be some. What I didn’t expect to find, and missed or overlooked altogether, was the emergence of a more comprehensive organisational espoused/in use phenomenon. This discovery took my research into an altogether unanticipated

direction. Iterating back to the literature though there were warnings that I could have paid more attention to; Bell and Thorpe (2013: 59) for example warn researchers of the possibility of this occurring describing the “serendipitous nature of the research process which means that interesting empirical phenomena often arise opportunistically”.

The requirement to operate at different levels with multiple roles also took its toll. For example, I needed to perform the energy-sapping role as a “political entrepreneur” far more than I had imagined; I had to “re-sell” (Greenwood and Levin, 2007: 58) the project over and over again as the political context shifted when supportive leaders were dispatched and new, more sceptical leaders replaced them. I had to learn about and then engage in “backstaging” (Coghlan, 2007: 298) in order to remain deeply cognizant of the “organisation’s power structures and politics” in order to keep the research and my own career safe. Personal rotation within my practice is so prolific that none of the leaders I interviewed are at the centre by the time I submit my thesis and as it turned out neither am I. It was an ethical risk I identified prior to my research that I assumed would simply not apply in my case, I was happy in my work and perhaps naively never expected to become otherwise. It has quite simply been the most demanding thing I have ever done.

#### 6.1.5 Approach to 1st Person Learning

My initial approach to “first person” learning was through a reflective journal that I created from merging Kolb’s experiential learning cycle and Schein’s cycle of observation, reaction, judgement and intervention (ORJI) models (Coghlan and Brannick, 2010: 19-28). This template was completed during and/or after interviews and other significant events to enable me to capture not only my post-event reflections of the actual event (what was said, who said it, when and where) but also to record my own thinking and the impact my presence and behaviour was having during these interactions. Coghlan and Brannick (2010: 148) advise action researchers that personal learning is enabled through reflection throughout the research period. I maintained this throughout the research period and the template is shown below.

### Thesis Reflexive Journal

Concrete Experience		Reflexivity in Action			Reflecting	Judgements	Learning
		What was I becoming aware of in the moment?	How were we interacting and relating?	Was I experiencing self-talk?	What did I become aware of as I thought about or reread the interview transcript?	What judgements did I make?	What might I do differently next time?
When							
Where							
Who							
What							

Based upon Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle, Schein's ORJI Model and Dr Lisa Anderson's Feedback

**Table 10 – Reflexive Journal**

Although I found the reflexive journal helpful to use during and immediately after each interview, my ongoing reflections tended to be most insightful when I was not deliberately reflecting but were when I was rather disconnected (consciously) from the research per se. I found that some of the connections and questions that were raised in me did not come whilst I was embedded in the organisation, neither when I was performing detached researching academic papers, but rather when doing something completely unrelated. I found that dislocated moments provided fertile periods for learning and growth. I would make connections when cycling to work, washing the car or whilst doing some other activity. Typically, I did not need to stop what I was doing and reach for my journal and it was during one of these moments that I realised the changes I had influenced as soon as I announced that I was starting the research, I changed in that moment in other peoples' eyes; for better or worse, the context had shifted and as it did I realised that I would also never be the same. It became so very clear to me that the action (in action research) starts long before any planned intervention takes place.

This new awareness drove me back into the literature regarding my methodological approach, I questioned myself and needed to understand where I was now positioned within the research and context. I investigated the connections between ethnography and action research. As the research progressed I certainly found it increasingly difficult to remain true to "ethnography"

as a methodology, becoming aware that I was not only shaping the context but also the emergent analysis. In fact, I reflected that I drifted from a pure ethnography in the very early stages of my research, certainly as the interviews unfolded and clearly in the coffee shop conversations that followed sometimes weeks or months after the interviews took place. I reflected that I was shifting into insider action research as an “interventionist, as contrasted with the insider research that focusses on observation and analysis only and does not aim to change anything” (Coghlan, 2007: 296). Reflection is something I purposefully try and do now and increasingly I find myself making time for “reflection on reflection” hoping to lead to a higher level of learning, learning that can be context independent, “mode 2” (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008: 9) or “meta-learning” (Coghlan, 2007: 301). Even as I make final changes to this thesis I recall some months ago I blocked out in my diary an hour a day, with no end date, and marked it with “time to think” to remind me daily of the need to reflect and learn. I disclose some of the key personal learning and development areas in the paragraphs below:

#### 6.1.6 How I Now Lead

The whole subject of authentic leadership went from something of a fascination for me to something I found myself doubting. Although initially, I found descriptions of authentic leadership enticing, in the end I struggled a little with the descriptions of authentic leadership and them being somehow likened to transformational leadership. For me there is no direct correlation between leadership style and authentic leaders, individuals can be equally authentic as a transactional leader as one could be as a transformational leader. What appears to matter much more than any specific trait is the congruence between what a leader really holds true and considers to be important about leadership and allowing that to inform and ultimately guide their behaviours. Authentic leaders have a strong instinctive orientation in relation to doing the right thing, a sort of leadership compass (George and Sims, 2007) but that compass can only point consistently and authentically when there is coherence between what is said (heard) and what is done (observed). Clearly being authentic is being true to oneself, so in that case, why cannot transactional leaders be considered as being equally authentic? (Avolio and Gardner, 2005: 329); surely one can be totally authentic as a transactional leader. I had to park this concern for the sake of my research but it remains an area of concern for me.

Despite concerns over transformational/transactional labels I believe that my own leadership style developed through almost 40 years of military service and C<sup>2</sup> from one that tended towards the transactional to something more akin to transformational. Indeed, when I reflect upon C<sup>2</sup>, and the way that it is inappropriately applied at the individual level, I find it to be

deeply transactional in nature, so transactional in fact that I no longer see “transactional leadership” as leadership at all; instead I consider transactional leadership as management and in the military management is profoundly affected by C<sup>2</sup>.

#### 6.1.7 How I Now Communicate

I have also adapted the way I communicate. My communications are now much more likely to be based upon creating a collaborative environment, a thinking space (Kline, 1999) and, where at all possible, I try to practice the art of “humble inquiry” (Schein; 2013). My own propensity to ask questions has really increased and although this remains a conscious activity, for now, I find with increasing regularity I am able to ask questions more naturally and have become much more curious, more critical and reflective. I am far more likely to enable my team to go their own way even if I have some reservations, I reinforce the point that getting things wrong is usually a prerequisite for eventually getting it right and I ask myself, and others, whose “right” is it anyway?

Apart from asking so many more questions, of myself, and others, I have also learned to become more credible and acceptable as a source of knowledge. In presenting an argument I came to realise experientially that the careful use of academic literature, rather than voicing my own opinion, was highly effective. It was a revelation to me in terms of my ability to get a message across. “Without data you’re just another person with an opinion” goes the saying attributed to W. Edwards Deming. This appears to be even more beneficial in hierarchical bureaucratic organisations who place so much attention on someone’s rank and status. It also allows you to take the emotion away from the discussion and remain much more objective. You do not “own” the information or point of view as much when you are telling someone else’s story and this appeared to make a very big difference in my organisation.

### 6.1.8 What I Worry About Still

Ethically, I have been left with a bit of a conundrum; “do no harm” proffers Mercer (2007) but is that really achievable within management research predicated upon organisational change? It seems inevitable that there are always going to be some winners and losers. I suppose time will tell and until then I will continue to wonder if I somehow undermined my organisation or some of those trying to lead it. Perhaps my research and interventions created discomfort in some and even resentment in others. I am confident that the organisation has changed but I will not know if the change was for the better and neither will I know that the catalyst for change was due to my research. It is clear I will never be sure and sometimes I am really ok with that, at other times it sits very uncomfortable with me and I am not always sure I left a positive legacy.

Looking back, I was probably subject to some manipulation and I certainly wondered if in some cases I was being “told” things in order for me to transfer these themes to the senior leaders. I had the ear of the Commander and Chief of Staff in a way that even their direct reports did not have. Jackson and Parry (2010: 148) warn that leaders can have a “tendency either to want to tell you what they think you want to hear about leadership or to convey a good impression about their leadership.” and I think that occurred to some extent.

Some important questions remain with me:

- *I wonder whether the layer under the senior leaders are actually ready “transformational” leadership?*
- *Do the Branch Heads reflect the general atmosphere in the organisation or is it a localised phenomenon?*
- *Do the Branch Heads see me as a conduit to get a message to the Command Group, am I being used?*
- *Am I trying to sway the discussions so that my own standing in the JWC is improved, am I using others?*
- *Am I ready to accept a perception of “failure” or loss of face?*
- *Do the leaders use the interviews and conversations we have to improve their standing by using me as a conduit to the Commander?*

- *Do some of the leaders paint a bleaker picture because they are not content with my role as an insider researcher and want to discourage it in the future, am I disliked?*
- *Do some of the leaders tell me what they think I want to hear, am I liked?*

#### 6.1.9 Authentic Authenticity

In my dealings with others I often had the sense that some leaders were not always being true to me or themselves, for example when going through the life story exercise I felt some were saying what they wanted to be heard rather than what they truly believed. For some the change seemed real and over time they did become more inclusive and cooperative, and this was remarked on by others who had observed these changes, others though seemed to be just playing the game. As Berkovich, (2014: 246) relates some leaders “generate and deliver “self-narratives” that somehow fit to what is expected might instead bury the authentic self even deeper down”.

I also wonder if my focus was on the right things. I started by thinking that it was the senior leaders who were failing to be authentic and yet as the research moved along I wondered whether it was, in fact, the layer directly under the senior leaders that were refusing or unable to notice the shift between what was espoused and what was in use. Then it occurred to me that the senior leaders may be convinced they have altered their styles yet that is not observed at all or experienced as an act. It is always easier to see the faults in others than the faults in ourselves; Argyris (1976: 367) indicates that people are rather better at detecting discrepancies between “in-use” and “espoused” theories in others than they were in themselves. I wonder if this could be applied to the managers who had been so consistent in their assessments of the leaders. It was a perplexing and uncomfortable period of time trying to focus on what could be causing this to occur; to identify the source of the perception gap; until I realised that I did not have to, there was personal and organisational learning to be had whichever way it was approached. I determined that it would not only be impossible but also almost certainly unhelpful to try and determine whose version of “reality” was most accurate and instead determined to research ways of reducing this perception gap.

#### 6.1.10 First Person Summary

It struck me as ironic that what I had started to “look in at”, I was now “being part of” (Anderson et al., 2015) and as the research went on I found myself thinking of a saying from Heraclitus; “No man ever steps in the same river twice, for it's not the same river and he's not the same

man.” A sentiment reinforced by Tulin (1997: 106) who describes “every moment of social life, every action, every reaction, is a produced moment”, a uniquely created experience redrawn in the moment as “a complex weave of ‘one time through/no time out’ occurrences” (Ibid.: 106 citing Boden, 1994). Interactions and conversations between the organisational members at the researcher then blend into a unique, single shot moments of “mutual learning” (Greenwood and Levin, 2007: 51).

I found that by stepping away from the intense focus associated with detailed research was I able to notice a more pervasive and limiting phenomenon. From my initial intent to observe leadership through an organisational culture change programme and the themes that prevailed, I became aware of a more pervasive issue right in front of us and yet unseen. Just as one cannot unsee what one has seen (Moore, 2007), everything I learned will inform, consciously or otherwise what I now observe, pay attention to, think about, behave. I see leadership and organisational culture moments now in full vivid colour and still, I know that picture to be incomplete. I notice inauthenticity in others and myself and wonder if it would have been better to remain oblivious to these things.

Researching leadership within your own organisation is certainly fraught with risk; gradually and irreversibly I start to notice and then see so clearly, what I learned to be ineffective leadership practices (Higgs, 2009). The research revealed things about my organisation and about myself that did not sit well with me. In the end, I started to see more and more evidence of poor leadership being tolerated, a blind eye turned, effectively giving permission for these behaviours to continue. As it turned out my research had an influence upon my decision to leave the organisation, accept a role outside of a military command incurring a significant loss in salary but for an agency that seems to be willing to live what it espouses. In my final interview with the Chief of Staff he remarked that they were sorry I was leaving but it was clear to him and the Commander “that you have outgrown this organisation”. I was again reminded of insider research as being an “original sin” (Moore, 2007) and the unintended consequences of looking deeply into the sensitive and usually hidden working of your organisation.

I have evidence in the form of deep structural changes that my organisation changed, evidence in the form of personally written notes and “LinkedIn” references that individuals changed. In 2015 I received the NATO Meritorious Service Medal – NATO’s highest award, an award that recognises my contribution to NATO and the JWC that reflects the period of my DBA study



and subsequent research. The award from NATO's Secretary General HE Jens Stoltenberg specifically mentions leadership and contribution (Kucukaksoy, 2015). I reflected somewhat indulgently that I was not born with that for which I was now being recognised; I learned to develop that leadership, through experiences and more significantly through the DBA programme and through the research I subsequently performed.

A question that haunts me as I finalise my research period is one on authentic authenticity and it applies to all three areas I now reflect on, 1<sup>st</sup>. 2<sup>nd</sup> and even 3<sup>rd</sup> person learning. For me, how much of my espoused "new ways of leading" are real and not transitionary, how much am I trying to prove that the DBA changed me, how authentic am I really being? These questions cannot be answered yet and not by me either, they stay with me though, like Pinocchio's ever-present cricket, whispering in my ear, who am I really?

## 6.2 Second Person Related

Leaving "self" aside for a while I now reflect on what the research may have meant for others. Ozanne and Saatcioglu (2008) make a case that a principal goal of action research "is to develop the capacities of collaborators" and here I think that the cycle of research and intervention through predetermined carefully considered action delivered. Antonacopoulou (2010: 219) challenges researchers to embrace both the "incompleteness of research practice and the importance of collaborative modes of engagement" and it is with this in mind that I approach my explanation of second person related reflection.

Second person engagement and development is said to be "primary in action research." (Coghlan and Holian, 2015: 5) and in the paragraphs below I prioritise the second person. Mercer (2007: 13) advises that it is better that insider researchers resist the temptation to tell their own stories, to make public their opinions with the interview process. Although I started off respecting that I found that some of the "action" ensuing came from the engagement and shared insights as the discussion flowed. Evidence of second person development and reflection emerged as one leader reflected upon his view of leadership abandonment compared with leadership delegation and trust. This cogenerated reflection appeared to create a liberating shift in thinking. Although I remained deeply conscious of the ethical and professional dilemma as the interviews took place.

The following extract comes from a discussion that evolved during one of the interviews with a senior manager:

*M 3 - "In the middle of the execution the Commander leaves the exercise, the Chief of Staff leaves the exercise, there's a big OF5 problem deploying OF5's to do stuff. Bottom line is, and this, I am trying to convey, we had four training teams deployed, all four of them were led by OF4's so Lieutenant Colonels, two of them, sorry three of them, of the three of the Lieutenant Colonels had never done this before, never. So and the message is you leadership you don't send out the OF5 level to help out, ok, you pin all responsibility on the OF4's inexperienced, oh and by the way the OF4's will have to deal with Three Stars, and the Senior Mentors and their training teams and all the other bits and pieces by the way, so you are happy to pin the responsibility on an inexperienced OF4 to deal with all these matters including the lead Senior Mentor Sir John and then you expect us to trust, you actually leave the exercise, when it comes down to the crunch you leave, physically. I got a lot of emails during the exercise 'where's the boss', and I said 'the boss has gone', 'ok where's the second boss', 'well he's also gone', 'well who's the boss then?', 'well beats me', and we were left in a leadership vacuum.*

*I        You know when I hear that part of me can't help but think, gosh that sounds like they must really trust the organisation. You know, in a way isn't that what we want to see described 'I am so comfortable with my team that I can go off now and do something else?'*

*R        Arggh yeah, yeah, yeah you are right you could say that, and in principle every Commander should work towards the situation where he is not needed anymore because the system just works but the organisation becomes a little bit jumpy and edgy. What if something bad happens suddenly, we need to have the big daddy around to make the call. Or at least the big daddy to have appointed somebody to make a call and then not kill him afterwards if he takes a risk. I would have been happy to assume the responsibilities I would have no problem with that but nobody asked. I can't*

*just go ahead and do it, but you are right in principle you could turn it into a good signal but people won't believe you."*

Towards the end of the extract above provides another example of suspicion and authenticity regarding leadership when he says ".....*in principle you could turn it into a good signal but people won't believe you."* Examples like the one above appeared often enough to make me wonder if the managers and leaders were really interested and ready to change at all. According to Denning (2007:86) "People are fed up with being commanded, controlled, compelled, directed, pushed, pulled, bullied, and browbeaten.". Yet many of the staff I interviewed seem to want the opposite, they want to be told what the outcome needs to be, they seem to want to have sense created for them and at the same time they are seeking self-directing autonomy. Ironically when offered that autonomy their immediate response is not what might be expected. It was very clear from some of the interviews that some people within my organisation and preferred the type of organisation that C<sup>2</sup> delivers.

*M3 - "A Command Group that is involved in areas in which they need to be involved in, where they provide early or timely guidance and intent, and then back it up with more guidance and intent as things evolve instead of just dropping them off, and not necessarily focus on the, purely on the outside world, but look in on our major outputs, be involved in the process, or give clear guidance that you won't be, or give clear guidance of what you expects so it's understood when somebody walks away they have the message, they know what to say, what to do instead of just leaving it vague, yeah I think it starts there, having somebody in this Head Quarters that enforces it, having an enforcer I think is always needed, you can't always everybody be the nice guy, somebody has to be the one that struck the hammer, appropriately, for this environment."*

I discovered that there was some literature regarding this phenomenon, with Bell and Thorpe (2013: 107) describing the outcome of an experiment to shift an organisation from "hierarchical, bureaucratic control to 'concertive' control in the form of self-managing teams." When allowing members of the organisation to develop their own "system of value-based normative rules" they found that rather than things becoming less formal and bureaucratic things actually became more tightly controlled as workers imposed their own rules and regulations and since these were no longer "imposed from above" but from all angles then they

could not be avoided; “concertive control appeared to draw the ‘iron cage’ of bureaucratic control even tighter to constrain organisational members even more powerfully.” I wondered too if, at least in the back of their minds, they are afraid to engage with and embrace softer styles in case they might somehow lose the ability to switch to a harder style when they really needed to. George and Sims (2011) ask the question if leaders were able to make the shift to more transformational approaches “what happens when the context changes? Will consensus or affiliative leaders be able to shift to a more urgent style to address the immediate situation?”

### 6.2.1 Organisational Silence

Cultural leadership (be that supportive or not of the change) occurs at the “level of the mundane” (Bligh, 2006) and it is susceptible to what is not said or what is passively allowed to occur (Morrison and Milliken, 2000; Verhezen, 2010). What is not said can be likened to what Argyris refers to as “off limits” and “undiscussable” (2010:188) and this phenomenon stifles any opportunity to change, learn and grow consequently leads to remaining “trapped in the status quo.” (Ibid: 188). An example closer to home came from a quote during one of the manager interviews and reveals how C<sup>2</sup> shows up in our collective thinking and therefore affects our leadership and organisational culture.

***M9 - “If you are a Lieutenant Colonel down here, at least from my National Service prospective, if the General is interested in it, then I’d better damn well be fascinated in it. So, if this is something he wanted for the command, whatever I feel about it is irrelevant because I’m going to do it.”***

Coming out of a Command Group meeting, where there had been an important issue discussed but not settled and it was clear that there was no consensus, silence prevailed, no one spoke up in the group, yet I noticed passionate sidebar discussions start between a couple of the leaders. Before I started this research, I would have done the same; now as I heard the potential for a truly shared awareness disappear I felt great disappointment. The General stopped me in the corridor stating that it was great that it had triggered these conversations, I smiled and inside I was burning to tell him that these conversations should have been going on in the group, I kept quiet and by my actions reinforced further that “organisational silence” (Morrison and Milliken, 2000) prevailed and that our environment was one where “undiscussable issues” (Cameron and Quinn, 2011, citing Argyris (1993) were abundant. Argyris (2010: 188) claims that “when we most need to learn, we paradoxically work hardest at shutting down

conversations, shutting down other people, and shutting down ourselves.” Covey (2004: 40) states that effective leader’s neither “deny nor repress conflict”; instead they consider it as fuelling growth, discovery and innovation. He claims that there can be no organisational peace “unless the provocative questions are brought out into the open and dealt with honestly.”

### 6.2.2 Trapped

Regarding 2<sup>nd</sup> person learning and as I mentioned in Chapters 2, 3 and 5 national and service histories were revealed profoundly and the demographical spread within our organisation also had a significant influence. But for a wrong turn, or a wrong decision or just through being in the wrong place and the wrong time, many of the senior managers could have been senior leaders, but they were not, and many felt that they knew so much better than those that had made it through the Branch Head (Manager) ceiling. Singer (2009) talks about the “super bowl effect”, leaders having been prepared through all their professional lives to lead in the field, and many of my interviewees looked back at particular power fuelled instances in time as the best part of their careers. These were clearly amongst the best times they could recall and doubtlessly helped create the leaders that I now interviewed. They struggle to let go of this (Singer, 2009: 81), so many of them talked with great nostalgia and enthusiasm about their days as “company” or “battalion” commanders. One of the leaders proudly described to me a drawing that he had been given by some of his soldiers; it was of a big silverback gorilla atop a mountain, the gorilla was having his back scratched by younger female gorillas as he surveyed his entourage. As he spoke his eyes appeared increasingly distant and the hint of a smile broke his typically stern appearance. It was so clear that this was a profound memory for him, one he was proud of, that he misses, and one that continues, even now I suspect to inform his leadership thinking, preferences and practices. “When I was a Battalion Commander” he repeated often evidently trapped in a leadership moment far, far away. Argyris (2010:180) lays at least some of the reason of organisations being “trapped” as being responses to earlier successes. Successes that inadvertently produce “a mind-set of uniformity and conformity” that to my mind is exactly what a C<sup>2</sup> paradigm aims not only to encourage but to enforce. He goes on to claim that under these conditions “People become committed to the status quo. They become arrogant, reinforced by their previous success.”

### 6.2.3 Reflections on Research Rigour

As 2<sup>nd</sup> person learning leads to the potential for 3<sup>rd</sup> person learning I also wanted to reflect upon the efforts taken to maintain an appropriate degree of rigour through the research. Rigour was considered following broadly the model in Chapter 4, Figure 20, utilising Coghlan and Casey's (2001: 680) guidance. This guidance is repeated and then commented upon in the table below:

<b>Aspects of Rigour within an Action Research Approach</b>	
<b>Aspects (Coghlan and Casey, 2001)</b>	<b>Evidential summary through the research</b>
Data generation, gathering, exploration and evaluation	Semi structured interviews, created through organisational awareness, prior short surveys and academic literature evolving to loosely coupled dynamic discussions. Thematic analysis revealing and codifying pertinent themes related to organisational development.
Research treads a path through “multiple and repetitious” research cycles	Interview questions and style refinements, transcriptions read and reread upon the basis of emergent information. Themes developing in the moment subsequently researched and reflected upon. Planning and performing incremental interventions such as articles, emails, posters and workshop exercises (Sewell, 2013).
Personal “assumptions and interpretations” aired, challenged and reframed	<p>My own “preconceived notions about issues, people and workplace reality” (Roth et al., 2007: 55) creating a narrow subjective and ultimately incomplete analysis. Selecting the themes to discuss produces and directs the narrative.</p> <p>Coghlan and Brannick (2010) prepare a researcher to minimise the impact of “preunderstanding” where a researcher may be experientially blinded due to familiarity with the context and the participants. Despite these warnings my focus on locating certain themes was incomplete.</p> <p>I was almost one third of the way through the interviews when I recognised that there was consistent evidence of a “say/do” gap</p>

	and at the same time I had to cast aside theories of organisational themes since there was little agreement on what they were nor why they mattered.
Engaged in multi-perception analysis that was “grounded in theory”.	<p>Coghlan and Holian (2015: 3) advise that action research evolves through the data, analysis and interpretations “as a consequence of intervention”, they go on to say that it will be neither possible, nor desirable, to attempt to control or predict this evolution.</p> <p>The perception of all 18 interviewees were accounted for and these perceptions were instrumental in leading me back into the literature. “Theories espoused” versus “theories in use” (Argyris, 1996) were instrumental to helping me better understand better the situation and remained related into research on authenticity as it applies to leadership (Avolio et al., 2004). Then on to the development of multi perception leadership reframes and enabling peer to peer “reality” checks (Avolio et al., 2004).</p>
Credibility judged on “useful” outcomes	<p>JWC “one team” organisational culture plan, new roles created, language and leadership training developed (Kucukaksoy, 2015). Content taken up by higher NATO HQ’s and integrated in the NATO Executive Development programme (NEDP). NEDP then set a group assignment to analyse all NATO organisational culture programmes. JWC was the only one that had survived and was “embedded” as an organisational development plan (Fenning et al., 2017). In September 2017 I was asked to speak and then provide a panel discussion on innovation, culture and leadership by the Supreme Commander of Allied Command Transformation, a French 4* General (Porkolab, 2017).</p>

**Table 11 – Aspects and Evidence of Rigour**

Despite there being some evidence of being “trapped” though other experiences after the end of my research left me touched and enthused, for example when I was presented with my leaving present that went some way to confirming that second person learning did take place.

It was an aerial picture of Stavanger and many of the leaders and managers had written within the border of the picture, one of the senior leaders who seemed to have been able to benefit the most from the experience; he wrote **“Garry, thank you for all the things I learned from you about leadership”**. I chose to consider this as evidence that 2<sup>nd</sup> person learning did occur.

### 6.3 Third Person Related

It is important to appreciate that third person learning is an emergent side-effect from the aggregation and synthetisation of first and second person learning (Anderson et al., 2015: 170) and although these have been covered individually I have not yet described the learning from an organisational perspective. I now do so looking first at some of the things that might have got in the way.

#### 6.3.1 Why is it so Hard for Military Organisations to be Transformational?

Schein (2010:17) provides us with an explanation as to why cultures influenced by C<sup>2</sup> paradigms might be so robust and resilient to change “The strength of that culture depends on the length of time, the stability of membership of the group, and the emotional intensity of the actual historical experiences they have shared.” I don’t imagine that an organisational culture shaped on battlefields wouldn’t score off the scale in most if not all of Schein’s attributes. It is perhaps then no surprise that militaries are often accused of being slow to transform (Cadle et al., 2004; March, 2008), unable to innovate and highly resistant to change, indeed my own experience as head of organisational development wrestling with a reorganisation has provided me with a rich first-hand experience of exactly that, and yet so many historical military successes, many made into incredible films and stories, are based on exactly the ability to innovate and transform rapidly.

Some of the greatest military victories over thousands of years have been profoundly dependent upon innovation; Hannibal’s march over the Alps was unforeseen and Nelson at Trafalgar was certainly not following Standard Operating Plans (SOPs) of the day. What about the Royal Air Force’s Operation Chastise, the bouncing bomb; conceptualised in April 1942, demonstrated in July 1942, authorised to be built to scale in November 1942 and finally dispatched 16/17 May 1943: incredibly rapid engagement and transformation. Step forward a few decades and reflect upon the Afghanistan Mission Network (AMN), so critical for operations in Afghanistan, and it could also be considered as a great example of improvising, engagement, innovation and rapidly introduced transformation. So militaries are actually incredibly innovative organisations, they have to be considering that “no plan survives contact with the



enemy” an often-used quote in military circles attributed to Helmuth von Moltke, Chief of the Prussian and German General Staff between 1858–88. Perhaps here lies a fundamental challenge for militaries generally in that so many military changes and innovations appear to need contact with the enemy first. They need to feel, it seems, an existential threat before real engagement, before innovative and transformational mindsets are really unleashed. What is it about military organisations that stifle their abilities to innovate without the requirement to be looking crisis directly in the eye? I try and answer that question in the following sections.

### 6.3.2 Transactional/Transformational Tendencies

Looking back at the transactional/transformational leadership comparisons there appears to be a relationship between transactional leadership and single loop learning and between transformational leadership and double loop learning (Argyris, 1976, Argyris and Schon, 1996; Bochman and Kroth, 2010). Challenging the status quo in any pervasive and persistent way involves thinking at another level, shifting from “single loop” to “double loop” learning. It is said that authentic leadership’s ultimate deliverable to organisations is “superior results over a sustained period of time” (George et al., 2011: 177) yet the price might be a little high for an organisation that rotates a significant proportion of their staff every two or three years, since short-term deliver of outcomes and crisis management do not need authenticity, they need clear unequivocal direction, a transactional approach to getting things done and in these terms C<sup>2</sup> is clearly an attractive and appropriate approach. Jackson and Parry (2010: 31) “As with behavioural theories of leadership, the most effective leaders are successful at enacting the transformation and the transaction.” but being “transformational is just not rewarded in the military in general.

If we look at mapping the military context upon the model introduced in Chapter 3 adapted from Bass (1990), Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995) and Hargis et al., (2011) across it is a surprise that militaries are able to transform at all.

Themes	Transactional	Transformational	Military Context
Leader's source of influence	Rank, position, status, formal, reciprocity	Relationships, character, competence, informal, inspiration	Ranks displayed on uniforms, as persona identifier when introduced and are standardised across NATO countries are fundamental for understanding levels of influence
How it operates	Within existing system boundaries	Works to stretch a system, stimulates intellectually	Standing operating procedures define how the organisation does business, consistency encouraged through inspection and audit systems.
Follower response	Compliance	Commitment	Compliance a prerequisite, commitment welcomed
Timescales	Short	Long	Staff rotate each 2-3 years, limited ability to influence transformation over a longer period
Rewards	Promotion, Pay , Privilege	Pride, self esteem, fulfilment	The ability to be promoted to a new rank with better perks, privileges and more authority. Needs to be noticed within the 2-3 year rotation period.
Supervision	Considered vital – close and procedures based	Not vital – distant and loosely directional	Various approached personality dependant but processes on reporting are highly formalised and standardised.
Assessment	Evaluation, measurement, historically based	Potential, imaginative, future based	Based on what was done, previously set targets achieved, diversions from which are not typically encouraged.
Impacts	Followers behaviour – what they do	Followers values , beliefs and attitudes – how they think	Followers actions, what is done.
Cultural Impact	Reinforces “what is”	Reveals “what could be”	Stabilises and makes routine, evolution tolerated in some areas, revolution not tolerated
Appropriate for	Delivering predetermined outcomes	Delivering innovation	Delivering outcomes, predetermined expectations, avoids surprises.
Focus on	Discipline, process, standards, rules	Deregulation, change, learning, experimentation	Standards, processes are repeatable cycles of activity sometime called “battle rhythms” set annual activities years ahead.
Characterised by	Sameness, routine and repeatable	Difference, spontaneous and unique	Consistency, regurgitation of what has be done before with minor improvements on what can be tolerated in terms of change.

**Table 12 – Transactional/Transformational Leadership Contrasted and Contextualised**

I believe that the nub of the problem is many in military and other hierarchical organisations connect  $C^2$  and leadership in error; they take organisational constructs (command and control and chains of command) and inadvertently try to apply this at an individual level, to people. The definitions of  $C^2$  described earlier in the thesis apply far less to people in organisations than the organisations themselves. What seems clear from the military context is that the application of  $C^2$  drives the staff to lean heavily towards encouraging a transactional style of leadership; a style of leadership that seems to me to be more aligned to management than leadership.

### 6.3.3 How we will Know when an Organisation is Authentically Transformational?

In Chapter 3 I introduced Grint's (2008) model (Diagram 1) to show that complexity and decision making have a relationship and that while  $C^2$  has a very important place under certain circumstances, in others, like transformation, it can actually be a barrier. In the table below, I try and summarise and consolidate my readings and research to provide a gauge from which to

determine whether one is actually operating within a transactional or a transformational organisation and the key is to observe the behaviours of the leaders who cast their shadow so profoundly into an organisation.

Observable Behaviours	In a transactional organisation leaders are likely to	In a transformational organisation leaders are likely to
Attitude	Claim to have done/seen it all before, nothing new to me. Blames others for poor performance.	Be curious and inquiring, openly admit knowledge gaps. Take responsibility for poor performance.
Process Response	Apply rigorously processes, give orders, issues tasks, time and product focussed.	Question processes, inquires with less focus on time and product more on understanding and content.
Managerial Approach	Insist upon chain of command at an individual level. Demands of the people they control. People seen as an embodiment of a job description.	Reach into the organisation for where the knowledge is, bypasses layers. Inspires people. People seen for what they are capable of and managed accordingly.
Resources Approach	Consider people as prime resource. Protect their resources, resist any attempt to pool or share. Build capacity “just in case”.	Consider knowledge as prime resource. Releases expertise and knowledge freely.
Communications Approach	Speak confidently on all subjects, disguise insecurity. Work to ensure “the others” understand and highlights when they don’t.	Listen humbly on all subjects, express vulnerability. Work to ensure that they themselves understand.
Pressure Response	Distribute downwards, invokes stress and imposes unilateral deadlines.	Resist upwards or absorb otherwise, create time to think and reflect for others and self.

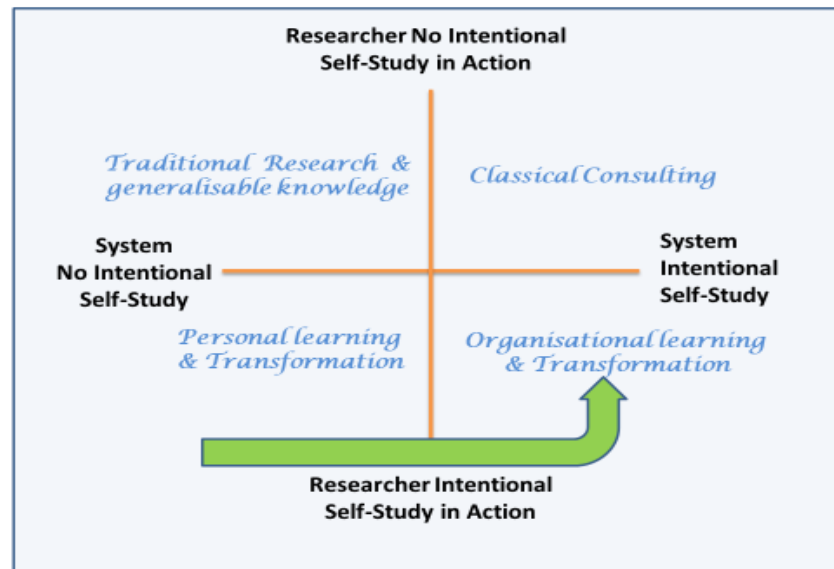
**Table 13 – Observable Characteristics of Authentic Transformational Behaviours**

When a leader’s focus is on getting things done, where they hold a short-term perspective and believe that there isn’t much new to learn for themselves, then one could expect a transactional culture to proliferate. Conversely, when a leader is more focussed on understanding, starting with themselves, where they hold a long-term perspective beyond their own time in post and where they listen more than they speak, where they humbly seek out the holders of knowledge to enhance their own, then this might encourage and ensure a transformational culture to emerge.

#### 6.3.4 Organisational Learning

According to Denning (2007: 38) effective leadership today is about an ongoing openness to dialogue, combining a fierce resolve with a continuing willingness to listen. Here the military might empower and spread the “courts martial principle” where the most junior staff member is invited to speak, and be listened to first (UK MOD, 2014: 33). It will require a courageous leader to press this agenda ahead and “courage is always an act, not a thought” (Marquardt,

2005: 53). The NATO JWC had the courage to act and as the only example of a successful organisational culture program that is now “embedded” into daily operations (Fenning et al., 2017) it has made the journey I hoped my research would help facilitate. This journey can be represented visually in Figure 27 below (see Figure 20 in Chapter 4):



**Figure 27 - JWC's Organisational Development Journey**

**(Based on Coghlan and Brannick's (2010, p. 103) - Focus of Researcher and System Continuum)**

Leaders and managers alike tend to want to leave their mark, to deliver something tangible that can distinguish them from their peers. Changing an organisation's culture is a long-term engagement (Whelan-Berry and Somerville, 2010) and it takes a selfless and forward-looking leader to commit resources to something that neither they nor their replacements, will ever really see; to commit to some lasting legacy. Marquardt (2005: 16) suggests that effective leadership has much to do with what happens after a leader has left the organisation; are they missed, did they leave an organisation in a better place or with the capacity to get to a better place. In the next Chapter, I consider the outcomes and impact; and whether the action research did leave the organisation with an ability to learn, grow and improve.

## Chapter 7 – ORGANISATIONAL REFLECTIONS, LEGACY and SUMMARY

In this Chapter, I reflect upon the legacy of my research and summarise the journey. I reflect upon whether my research and actions left my organisation in a better place and also look to consider why the research was ineffective when that was the case. I also disclose how, although the research at the outset was very much focussed on a military context, the findings could also translate to other fairly formal organisations of which there appear to be many examples. Cameron and Quinn (2011: 812) “Large organisations and government agencies are generally dominated by a hierarchy culture, as evidenced by large numbers of standardised procedures, multiple hierarchical levels”.

It is not lost on me that analysing the relationships between leadership and organisational culture and using this analysis to derive specific interventions is contentious. It is tempting, through the research, to create links and even possible to defend some of them as I hope I have done but certainty, repeatability and generalisability are not necessarily achievable when studying something as ephemeral as leadership and organisational culture. Cunliffe (2011: 656) reminds us that “social realities and knowledge are not durable in the sense of being replicable, generalizable, and predictive but instead offer contextualised understandings.” With Bell and Thorpe (2013: 68) indicating that “generalisability might therefore not be worth pursuing so enthusiastically.”

Practice-based research can be thought to be successful when the focus of the research “moves beyond rigour and relevance” and instead moves towards organisational impact; a core theme of “practice-relevant scholarship” as described by Antonacopoulou (2010: 220). Assessing the validity of action research is to make an assessment regarding the validity of any outcomes. Validity then is judged upon the assessment of whether people, relationships and/or processes really changed as a consequence of the examinations, research and intervention (Ozanne and Saatcioglu, 2008). As I described in Chapter 6, I believe that I can confidently claim I changed through the process, my organisation certainly changed and I would like to believe therefore that a handful of the leaders also did so; for some though the process seemed to lead them to dig their heels just a little bit further into the ground. Thankfully this does not reflect the outcome generally which was considered successful enough to be being implemented elsewhere.

## 7.1 Legacy

In reporting the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> person learning in Chapter 6, I explained the impact to my practice and the people working with it. I explained that I believe strongly that there has been organisational and individual impact regarding leadership learning and personal growth. However, I remain cognizant that these changes could be fleeting and that the changes made are no panacea to our organisational challenges. I also wonder whether we could have developed even further, creating even more of an impact, in the next section I raise some of the issues that might have hindered development and impact.

### 7.1.1 Why Was It Not Even More Impactful?

Baumann (2008) claims that “The instinctive association of ‘unity of effort’ with ‘unity of command’ in the military mind-set makes it difficult for the military to consider alternatives to a hierarchically organised chain of command” (Ibid: 72). NATO operations can surely be commanded and controlled but can the same be said for NATO transformation, can transformation ever be commanded or even controlled at all? What is in it for a successful leader, many of them having reached the pinnacle of their career, most of whom who will depart the international military arena after two years, to learn a new leadership style anyway? Could Sir Basil Liddell Hart, the British military historian and strategist have been right when he claimed, “The only thing harder than getting a new idea into the military mind is to get an old one out” March (2008: 113) puts it another way; “Perhaps the greatest problem for sustaining exploration is the way in which adaptation encourages patience with old ideas and impatience with new ones.” (Gerras and Wong: 2013).

#### 7.1.1.1 Closed Minds

There is little doubt in my mind that for some of the people who had spent their entire lives in the militaries, civilians tend to be tolerated rather than truly accepted. For some my being civilian in a predominantly military organisation left me at a disadvantage, I felt that I was not considered equal to the leaders I was trying to influence and almost all of them felt “they know all that already” and could not learn from me nor anything I was offering. One example still sticks vividly in my mind that I experienced during the research period. The JWC Commander had called a social gathering at his house and there was an 80-20% military to civilian mix of attendees, quite reflective of our organisation. I was talking to one of the leaders, and over his shoulder, I saw the oldest leader we had enter the room and walk towards us. Since I had seen him and the other leader hadn’t I raised out my hand to greet the latest arrival. The new arrival

looked down at my hand and shook his head, “**warriors first**” he bellowed, and shook the hand of my surprised conversational partner first. The “bands” that bind these “brothers” are deep and wide.

#### 7.1.1.2 Structural Reinforcements of Behaviour

Action research imposes on the researcher a “commitment to democracy” that appears to sit uncomfortably within a hierarchal setting so influenced by C<sup>2</sup> (Nugus et al., 2012: 1947). Talbot and O’Toole (2009: 357) reinforce this dilemma posing the question “if subordinates are empowered to act in autonomous ways, how can commanding officers maintain control within their units?” Taking us back to the question of control and the militaries dependence upon it. Talbot and O’Toole (2009: 357) also claim that where a leader is positioned in the organisational structure strongly influences how these individuals lead, their leadership being “informed by their location within organisational structures, as well as by cultural cues that favoured rule following and obedience.” They go on to ask “is it reasonable to expect leaders to empower subordinates so as to facilitate their learning, when leaders are feeling disempowered by organisational structures, policies and cultures that stifle their abilities to make decisions?” (Ibid). There appears to be very little organisational and even less personal incentive for some of these leaders to embrace such change.

#### 7.1.1.3 Vulnerability Is Considered A Weakness

Asking senior leaders in an organisation, as I did, to identify their “espoused theories”, and to compare them with their “in-use theories” is effectively asking them to show vulnerability and question openly their own leadership and this sharply contradicts their training and the behaviours rewarded during successful careers spanning in many cases more than 30 years. It takes a courageous and humble leader to ask for, listen to and act upon feedback from their peers and there is very little chance in a military C<sup>2</sup> environment that they will hear from their peers, let alone their subordinates. I recently experienced this again during an innovation conference (Schiller, 2017) where the 4\* General was eager to introduce a more innovative approach within his command, one senior southern European military member stated that in his country “no one ever spoke after the Boss had spoken, because that it was a sign of disrespect” and I watched as the 4\* tried to make clear, humbly, respectfully, that he needed to know what was on their minds in spite of their history, he wanted to hear them but their culture and military history stopped it from happening. Those at the very top seem to know intuitively when to stop talking and start listening, they know that true attentiveness signals respect for



people of all ranks and roles, they are able to maintain a sense of curiosity, and even a degree of humility. Humility keeps pride in check, deters complacency and resists arrogance (Various, 2012: 83), humility “is an attractive and powerful quality and a key ingredient of leadership”, but in organisations where humility is not rewarded at all, it is a real challenge trying to encourage it.

#### 7.1.1.4 We Are Just Not Ready For It

Jackson and Parry (2010: 44) warn that striving to achieve what may describe as authentic leadership comes with some risk, reducing the agency of the followers and perhaps encouraging a dependency that leaders might typically want to reduce. They make the point that “Their quest for genuinely authentic, ethically sound and spiritually enlightened leaders maintains the leader-centric perspective which endeavours to solve leadership problems by focusing on the leader. Their followers, therefore, continue to play a marginal and incidental role.” (Ibid.). There is a risk of course that I inadvertently ended up reinforcing this even further by researching the leaders rather than the branch heads that would have been equally relevant for the organisation.

It is not only individuals that have both “theories in use” and “theories espoused” (Argyris and Schön: 1996) but organisations too. My organisation went to great lengths to develop their values of being innovative, inclusive, supportive and accountable and published those around the notice boards, corridors and even as far as adapting recruitment interviews to align with what we espouse. I cannot help but wonder how others would describe our observed performance against these to identify our organisational “in-use” theories. I suspect we are not doing as well as we say we are and perhaps there are good reasons for this. Jackson and Parry (2010: 104) remark that it is not unusual for organisations to espouse empowerment and artefact levels (like value statements) yet continue to “maintain domination at the deep structure levels.”. These deep structures being reinforced through alternative artefacts like parking place allocation, seating places, who speaks when and other enforced or encouraged deferential behaviours. Schneider et al. (1996:7) suggest that “Changes in hierarchy, technology, communication networks, and so forth are effective only to the degree that these structural changes are associated with changes in the psychology of employees.” This is no easy task as exemplified by one of the leaders interviewed when he asked the following question during an interview:



***L8 - “How do you empower people to lead in an organisation that is a hierarchical structure, because we are all comfortable with the hierarchy?”***

Yet it is clear from the success of organisations like McChrystal's (2015) that C<sup>2</sup> is not necessarily specific to military organisations, there are many “hard” organisations operating within relatively formal bureaucratic frameworks where hierarchies are not only observable but also applied and these can be likened to a C<sup>2</sup> organisation. Cameron and Quinn (2011: 2585) “found that the largest percentages of firms were dominated by a hierarchy culture” and claim that almost half of all organisations are profoundly hierarchical in nature. Holmes (2007:1995) also claims that formal power and structure is not as rare as some think, he remarks that “the great majority of workplaces are intrinsically hierarchical in structure”. During a recent international HR conference, I presented a paper based upon my research (Hargreaves and Anderson, 2015) and after the session was complete two members of the audience approached me to state that their organisations were also run within a C<sup>2</sup> paradigm. I was somewhat surprised to discover that those organisations were associated with the NHS and national schooling.

#### **7.1.1.5 Authentic Leadership May Not Be The Answer**

Returning to the theme of leadership described as evolving traits (Jackson and Parry, 2010) it could be said that authentic leadership is just the latest leadership fad (Huczynski, 1993). Yukl (1999: 302) insists that although typological definitions are popular in the literature they have “limited utility for increasing our understanding of effective leadership” and are little more than “simplistic stereotypes”. Some authors believe that the act of striving towards becoming “authentic” is a sure way to ensure that it is never able to be reached (Berkovich, 2014: 245), and here I have some sympathy; if you are a more “transaction” leader and that is truly authentic within you, then how or why should a leader pretend to be something else – that seems to defy the descriptions of authentic leadership that tend towards a transformational style.

## **7.2 Summary**

In 2012 and as a consequence of the JWC's changing operational contexts (see Table 1) and the JWC staff members own feedback my organisation commenced an organisational development process that ended up as a complete organisational optimisation programme that including changing aspects of organisational structures and organisational cultures. This thesis

studies and reports my own organisation's attempts to understand organisational culture in order to encourage a shift in leadership and to engage the JWC staff to supplement their highly-developed ability to C<sup>2</sup> an organisation with altogether softer approaches to leadership. Softer approaches are said to result in increasing levels of participation, collaboration and emancipation so as to set the scene for a sustainable organisational culture transformation. Ironically Nugus et al., (2012: 1947) make the point that emancipatory, participatory endeavours may struggle with organisations that exude hierarchy, bureaucracy and power distances. Leadership has the potential, perhaps the obligation, to change this. To exemplify and insist upon the application of personal feedback, coaching, express appreciation, value and to bring about organisational clarity around the organisation's mission. Leaders are expected to behave in line with the aspirations they espouse and to translate and communicate organisational visions and goals so that organisational members can make sense of and align their behaviours accordingly (Weick, 2001). They are considerably more effective and believable when they do so authentically.

Colin Powell, former 4\* General and 65<sup>th</sup> US Secretary of State, makes the point that "Leadership is the art of achieving more than the science of management says is possible." (Harari, 2003). Stanley McChrystal, another former 4\* General suggests that Military leaders need to stop pretending they are the omniscient chess-master, controlling the destiny and movement each piece and rather transform to an end state where all the chess pieces are encouraged to think for themselves, to communicate together laterally as well as up and down the organisation and determine their own courses of action. McChrystal, now head of the McChrystal group, now leads an organisation that somewhat ironically claims to:

***"partner with you to change processes and behavior to make your organisation more adaptable. We take your company from a command structure and teach you how to communicate across silos and operate like a networked team of teams"***

and yet our own organisations are filled with people who do not appear at all ready for this. They appear much more comfortable being told what to do, in some cases how to do it and transformative thinking and action is somehow limited.

The rather unpalatable reality for those strongly attached to a C<sup>2</sup> mindset is that organisational culture changes cannot be commanded nor controlled since they are subject to the values and beliefs of the members of the organisation. You can tell someone what to do, when and how to do it, but you cannot command nor control someone's values or beliefs. On the other hand, a leader has ultimate control over their behaviour, what they actually do, and that seems to matter so much more than what they say. Schein (2010:104) posits that "every group, organisation, occupation, and macroculture develops norms around the distribution of influence, authority, and power" and so much of that development appears to be driven from what is observed rather than what is simply stated. When Stanley McChrystal joined ISAF as the 4\* Commander he had become accustomed to eat only one large meal a day late in the evening. Over a period of months his close staff adopted the same behaviours, some enduring significant discomfort on the way, convinced that if it was somehow good for the general, it must be good for them. He did not command this change in their beliefs, he wasn't even aware at the time that it had happened (McChrystal, 2015). What leaders actually do seem to be so important and much more important than what they say. When what is said, and what is done is coherent, then leadership is aligned rather than contradictory and that appears to make such a difference to those being led. It doesn't seem enough though for leaders to wait until they have reached the highest levels of military office for them to lead in authentically, they need to lead like that before they retire and they need to inspire and engage managers below them to lead in such a way as to engage, inspire and nurture collaboration and commitment and you just cannot command nor control collaboration or commitment. It's all about the leadership it seems; leadership as a verb and not a noun (Raelin, 2011).

The thesis then describes an attempt to address this challenge directly and to bring about leadership and organisational change in an international and politically significant organisation. It was performed from within a North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) military centre the NATO Joint Warfare Centre (JWC); a centre said to be at the forefront and a catalyst for multinational military transformation through training and education (Kucukaksoy, 2013). It was research that commenced from a position of trying to better understand an organisation rather than to change it, that evolved into leadership research culminating with organisational and individual change at the core. The thesis describes how a research, intervention, research cycle addressed authentic leadership development and created through research is now a fundamental part of a newcomers on boarding package, has been used in our higher command and is now part of the NATO Wide Executive Development

programme that I now “teach” on. These interventions offer reflective themes to military leaders working in transformational multinational entities; themes that may also be relevant for others in hierarchically founded organisations and there appears to be no shortage of them. My hope therefore is that my research may also provide some insights for other hierarchical bureaucratic organisations and especially ones considering the introduction of softer approaches to leadership.

During an ACT-sponsored innovation panel (Porkolab, 2017) I was briefing senior members of ACT on innovation and leadership and told them the story of how many of those I researched viewed the times when they were in Command as their finest moments, I noticed a lot of nodding heads in the audience. It seems everyone loved to be in Command, not so many were fans of being controlled. At the end of Gardner et al’s. paper (2005: 368) the authors remark that “the time has come to understand more fully how to develop authenticity in our leaders and their followers” and I hope that this thesis has contributed something to that perceived gap in understanding HOW we might start to create an environment where leaders and followers are afforded the time and stimulus to be able to reconnect, reflect, reframe and reinvigorate their leadership story. Looking back at the quote from Elkins (1998: 2) who said: “***In the military, command and then control go together as hand and glove.***” perhaps the time has come to consider taking the hand out of the glove a little more often.

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## Appendix A – Organisational Survey Questions

- My workload is manageable
- I am confident about my ability to do my job
- Overall, the trial JWC structure has been an improvement for me
- Overall, the trial JWC structure has been an improvement for the JWC
- I feel that I have a good understanding of the trial structure
- I have a clear understanding about my role in the JWC
- I understand my responsibilities
- I feel that I can make appropriate decisions myself
- I have significant influence over what happens in my branch
- The maintenance of specialist knowledge in the JWC is adequate
- The maintenance of corporate knowledge in the JWC is adequate
- The JWC has all the appropriate key functions in place
- I spend too much time on tasks which do not fit within my branch or role
- There are things that my branch/section should do but it is not able to do
- Every member of our branch is actively engaged in the branch's activities
- Parts of my job would be better suited to a different functional area
- The branch is as small as it can be while still being effective
- The way in which work is assigned in my branch is logical
- The structure of my branch is well designed
- The workload is equally distributed across the branch
- The functional areas within my branch are constructed to a minimum requirement
- Parts of my branch's functions could be provided as a service from elsewhere
- Parts of my branch's functions should be provided as a service from elsewhere
- Key players from other branches are accessible when needed
- Key players in our branch are accessible when needed by others
- Communication is effective between the branches I interact with
- Our tasks are clearly aligned to the mission of the JWC
- The JWC's functions are connected in the best organizational way
- When working on tasks, my chain of command is clear
- I receive clear direction for tasks from my chain of command
- I receive timely direction for tasks from my chain of command
- The JWC's management construction is efficient
- The work processes used within my branch are effective
- The work processes used within my branch are efficient
- The processes used within the JWC are effective
- The trial structure has resulted in a more effective organization
- The trial structure has resulted in more successful exercise delivery
- It is clear who is responsible for implementing important tasks
- The trial structure has resulted in a more successful delivery of transformation
- In the JWC we have good interpersonal skills
- In the JWC we have effective communication channels
- In the JWC we are trusted
- In the JWC we are committed to completing our tasks
- In the JWC we are recognized for our efforts
- In the JWC we have the support of our leaders
- In the JWC our leaders and management live the 'One Team' values
- In the JWC we offer support, even if it is not our specific role
- In the JWC we are respectful of others
- In the JWC we adapt quickly to new challenges
- In the JWC we are always open to make improvements
- In the JWC we listen to all levels in the organization
- In the JWC we view mistakes as an opportunity to learn and grow
- In the JWC we have a shared view of our tasks
- In the JWC we apply our best efforts In the JWC we feel valued
- The JWC is a positive, performance-orientated and energetic working environment
- In the JWC feedback is a normal feature of our working environment
- In the JWC there is a positive attitude to challenges
- In the JWC there is a will to try new ways of doing things



## Appendix B – Organisational Hotspots

		My workload is manageable	I am confident about my ability to do my job	Overall, the trial IWC structure has been an improvement for me	Overall, the trial IWC structure has been an improvement for the IWC	I feel that I have a good understanding of the trial structure	I have a clear understanding about my role in the IWC	I understand my responsibilities	I feel that I can make appropriate decisions myself	I have significant influence over what happens in my branch	The maintenance of specialist knowledge in the IWC is adequate	The maintenance of corporate knowledge in the IWC is adequate	The IWC has all the appropriate key functions in place	I spend too much time on tasks which do not fit within my branch or role	There are things that my branch/section should do but it is not able to do	Every member of our branch is actively engaged in the branch's activities	Parts of my job would be better suited to a different functional area	The branch is as small as it can be while still being effective	The way in which work is assigned in my branch is logical	The structure of my branch is well designed	The workload is equally distributed across the branch	The functional areas within my branch are constructed to a minimum requirement	Parts of my branch's functions could be provided as a service from elsewhere	Parts of my branch's functions should be provided as a service from elsewhere	Key players from other branches are accessible when needed	Key players in our branch are accessible when needed by others	Communication is effective between the branches / interact with	Our tasks are clearly aligned to the mission of the IWC	The IWC's functions are connected in the best organizational way	When working on tasks, my chain of command is clear	I receive clear direction for tasks from my chain of command	I receive timely direction for tasks from my chain of command	The IWC's management construction is efficient	The work processes used within my branch are effective	The work processes used within my branch are efficient	The processes used within the IWC are effective	The trial structure has resulted in a more effective organization	The trial structure has resulted in more successful exercise delivery	It is clear who is responsible for implementing important tasks	The trial structure has resulted in a more successful delivery of transformation	In the IWC we have good interpersonal skills	In the IWC we have effective communication channels	In the IWC we are trusted	In the IWC we are committed to completing our tasks	In the IWC we are recognized for our efforts	In the IWC we have the support of our leaders	In the IWC our leaders and management live the 'One Team' values	In the IWC we offer support, even if it is not our specific role	In the IWC we are respectful of others	In the IWC we adapt quickly to new challenges	In the IWC we are always open to make improvements	In the IWC we listen to all levels in the organization	In the IWC we view mistakes as an opportunity to learn and grow	In the IWC we have a shared view of our tasks	In the IWC we apply our best efforts	In the IWC we feel valued	The IWC is a positive, performance-orientated and energetic working environment	In the IWC feedback is a normal feature of our working environment	In the IWC there is a positive attitude to challenges	In the IWC there is a will to try new ways of doing things
Question	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.8	1.9	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.7	3.8	3.9	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.5	5.1	5.2	5.3	5.4	5.5	5.6	5.7	6.1	6.2	6.3	6.4	7.1	7.2	7.3	7.4	7.5	7.6	7.7	7.8	7.9	7.10	7.11	7.12	7.13	7.14	7.15	7.16	7.17	7.18	7.19	7.20	
Base Support	4.14	4.57	4.14	3.57	3.29	4.29	4.57	4.29	4.29	4.14	4.14	3.71	3	3.71	3.86	3.14	4.29	4	3.71	3.43	4	2.71	2.71	3.71	4.43	4.29	4.14	3.57	4	3.71	3.86	3.86	4.29	4.29	3.43	3.57	4.29	3.57	4.14	3.71	3.86	4.14	4.29	4.14	3.71	3.86	4	4	3.71	3.57	3.43	3.71	3.71	4	3.71	3.57	3.57	3.86	3.57	
BUDFIN	3.7	5	3.2	3.1	3.5	4.6	4.9	4.7	3.4	3.4	3.6	3.5	1.9	2.7	4.5	1.6	4	4	4.2	2.9	3.7	1.5	1.1	3.6	4.2	3.9	4.3	3.3	4.4	4.2	4.3	2.9	4.3	4.4	3.1	3.8	3.7	3.1	3.4	3.4	3.4	4.2	4.2	3.1	4	3.3	3.9	3.7	3.9	3.8	2.8	3	3.6	3.9	3.2	3.8	2.9	3.7	3.5	
CAX Support	3.57	4.29	4	3.86	4	4.43	4.14	3.71	3.29	3.14	3.14	3	2.14	3.14	3.86	2	3.86	4.14	4	3.71	4.14	1.71	1.14	4	3.86	4.29	4.14	3.71	3.71	3.86	3.86	3.86	4	3.86	3.86	3.57	3.57	3.14	3.57	3.43	3.57	4.14	4.43	3	4.14	3.71	3.86	4	3.43	3.86	3.57	3.86	3.14	4.14	3.29	3.86	3.43	3.86	3.57	
CCIE	4	4.43	3.14	3.14	2.57	4.14	4.14	3.57	3	2.57	3	2.71	2.29	3.71	3.57	3	4.14	3.86	3.71	3.29	4.57	2.43	2.43	3.57	4.43	3.71	4.29	3.14	3.57	3.57	3.86	2.29	3.29	3.29	3.14	3.29	3.29	3.86	2.43	4	3.57	3.57	4.14	3.57	3.57	3.14	3.57	4.14	3.29	3.57	3	3.43	3.29	4.43	4	4.29	3.57	4	3.57	
CIS Services	3.6	4.8	2.6	2.2	3.4	4.4	4.6	3.6	3.8	2.8	2.6	3.2	2.2	3.2	4.6	1.6	3.4	3.6	3.8	3.6	2.8	2	1.6	3	4	3.8	4.2	2.4	4	4.2	3.8	2.8	3.2	3.2	2.8	2.6	2.6	2.8	2.4	4.2	3.4	4.2	4.8	3.6	4.4	4	4.2	4.6	4	3.8	3.2	3.4	3	4.6	4.4	4.6	3.6	3.6	3.4	
Command Group	4.2	4.6	3.4	3.6	4	4.6	4.6	4.2	3.6	3.8	4.2	4.4	3.2	2.6	4.4	2.2	4.2	4.6	4.2	3.8	4	1.4	2.4	4.2	3.8	3.6	4.4	3.8	4	4.2	4.2	3.4	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.4	3.2	4	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.8	4.4	3.8	4	3.6	3.6	3.8	3.4	3.2	3.2	2.4	3.6	4	4	3.4	2.8	3.4	3.2	
Community Services	4	5	4.5	4.5	4.5	5	5	4.5	4	4.5	4.5	4.5	2	2	4	2	4	3.5	4	3.5	4	1	1	4	3.5	5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4	4.5	4.5	4	4.5	5	4.5	4.5	4.5	3.5	4	3	3.5	3	4	4	3.5	3	3.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	3	3	2.5	3.5	3	
Content Branch	3.7	3.95	3.75	3.55	3.5	4.25	4.3	3.9	3.55	2.7	2.95	2.85	2.45	2.45	3.7	2.35	3.4	3.9	3.35	3.4	3.55	2.55	2.6	3.4	3.6	3.4	4.25	3	3.85	3.85	3.6	3.25	3.9	3.8	3.25	3.25	3.7	3.2	3.55	4.05	3.65	3.95	4.35	3.65	3.8	3.75	3.9	4.3	3.6	3.85	3.6	3.85	3.5	4.2	3.5	3.9	3.6	3.8	3.8	
Directorate Chief	4.5	4.75	5.25	4.25	4.75	5	4.75	4.5	5.25	4.25	3.5	4.25	3.5	3.25	5	1.5	5.5	5.25	5.25	3.25	5.25	3.5	3.5	3.5	4.75	4.25	5	3.25	4.25	4.5	4	4.25	4.5	4.5	4.25	4.25	4.5	4.5	4	4.25	3.75	3.75	4.75	4.25	4.5	4.75	4	4.5	4.5	3.75	4	3.75	4	4.5	4.25	3.75	3.25	3.75	3.25	
Doctrine	4.8	4.2	2.8	3.6	3.8	4	4	3	3.4	2	2.4	3	2.2	3.2	3.8	4	3.8	3.8	4.2	3.8	4	3	2.8	3.8	4.8	3.6	3.4	3	3.6	3	4	2.4	4	4	2.6	2.6	3.6	3.6	3.2	3.2	2.8	3.6	4.2	3.6	3.6	2.2	3.6	4.4	3.6	3.6	3.4	3	2.8	3.6	3.2	3	3	3.6	3	
Ex Planning Branch	4.38	4.69	2.75	3.06	3.88	4.56	4.44	4.56	3.69	3	3.19	2.69	2.44	2.88	3.94	2.5	3.81	2.81	3.5	3.81	3.38	2.69	2.38	3.44	4.19	3.75	4.13	2.81	3.38	3.69	3.69	2.94	3.5	3.63	3.5	3.06	3.19	3.13	3.13	4.06	3.69	4.19	4.56	3.81	4.25	3.75	3.94	4.25	3.81	3.56	3.38	3.5	3.5	4.31	3.75	3.94	3.5	3.94	3.56	
HRM & IT	3	4.33	3.17	3	4	4.83	4.67	3.5	3.17	3.33	3.67	4	2	3.33	3.83	1.67	4	3.33	3.17	2.33	4.83	2	1.67	4	4.33	3.17	4	3.5	3.83	3.17	2.83	2.17	3.5	3.33	3.5	3.17	4.5	3.67	3.83	2.83	2.5	2.83	3.67	2.67	3	2.67	2.83	3.33	3	3	3	2.67	2.67	3.33	2.83	3	2.5	3	2.67	
IM/C4 Branch	3.92	4.69	3.46	3.46	4.23	4.62	4.62	4.46	3.77	3.69	3.85	3.77	2.69	2.85	4.23	2.15	4.54	4.15	4.46	4.08	3.85	2.23	2.23	4.31	4.31	3.92	4.62	3.85	4.15	4.15	4	3.54	4.08	4	3.69	3.85	3.85	4.08	3.85	4.08	4	4.38	4.54	4.08	4.23	4	4.15	4.38	4.15	4.08	3.69	3.77	3.85	4.08	4.08	4.08	3.46	4	4.08	
LEGAD	4.33	4.33	3.33	3.67	3.33	4	4.33	4.33	3.67	3.67	3.67	3.67	2.33	2.33	4.33	1.33	4.67	4.67	4.67	4.33	4.33	2	2	3.33	3.33	4	4	3.67	4.67	4.33	4.33	3.67	4.33	4.33	4	3.33	3.33	3.33	3.33	4	4	4	4	4	4.33	4.67	3.67	4.33	4	4	4	4.33	3.67	4	4	4	3.67	4.33	4.33	
MIL/INFO SEC	4.5	5	2	3	3.5	4	5	5	4	3	3	3	2	2.5	3.5	2	3.5	3.5	3.5	2.5	3.5	2	2	3.5	4	3.5	4	3	4	3.5	3.5	3	3.5	4	3.5	3	3	3	4	3.5	4	4	4	4	4	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5
Other	4	5	3	3	3	5	5	4	5	3	3	4	3	4	5	2	4	4	3	4	4	2	2	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	5	3	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	3		
PAO	4.33	5	1.83	3.17	4	4	4.5	4.83	4.5	3.17	3.33	2.67	2.17	4.17	3.67	1.83	3.33	3.5	2.5	3.17	3.5	1.5	1.17	4.17	4.5	3.33	4.67	2.5	3.17	4	3.83	3	3.83	3.33	3.33	2.83	3	3.33	3	3.67	3.17	3.5	4.5	3.33	3.5	3.33	4.33	4	4.17	4.33	3.17	3.33	3.5	4.67	3.5	3.67	3.83	4.33	4.17	
Plans & Programmes	4	4	4	4.2	3.8	4.2	4.6	3.6	4	3.4	3.2	4	2.8	2.2	5	2.8	4.8	4.4	4.4	4.2	4.4	2	1.8	4	4.2	4	4.6	3.4	4.6	4.2	4.2	3.6	4.4	4.4	3.6	4.2	4.4	3.8	4	4.4	3.6	3.8	4	4.2	4.2	4	4.2	3.8	3.6	3.4	3.4	3.2	3.6	4.4	4.2	3.8	3.8	3.6	3.4	
QA Branch	4	4.73	3.45	3.55	3.73	4.18	4.45	4.45	3.55	3	3.18	3.36	2	2	4	2	4.09	3.73	3.73	4.09	4.09	2.09	2.09	4.36	4.64	3.73	4.45	3.09	2.45	3.18	3.09	3.09	4.27	4.36	3.55	3.36	3.36	3.36	2.91	4.45	3.36	4.73	4.55	4.09	4.36	3.91	4.18	4.36	4	4.09	3.73	3.73	3.55	4.45	4.09	4.09	3.64	4	3.82	
RLS	4	4.57	2.29	2.71	4	5	5	4.14	3.71	3.43	3.43	3.14	3.43	2.43	4.14	1.86	3.14	4.29	4	3.71	4	3.14	3	4.14	4.29	3.86	4.43	3.43	4.14	4.14	3.86	3.57	4	3.57	3.29	3.29	2.71	3.43	2.86	3.71	4	4	4.71	4	3.86	3.43	4.14	4.43	4.14	4.29	3	4.14	3.57	4.71	4.14	3.43	3.29	4.14	4.29	
Scenario Branch	3.5	4.73	3.18	3.55	3.14	4.45	4.5	3.91	3.27	3.09	2.82	2.68	2.77	3	3.68	2.45	3.27	3.73	3.18	2.82	3.32	2.45	2.18	4.09	4.36	3.55	4.18	3.32	3.41	3.73	3.5	2.91	3.41	3.45	3.27	3	3.09	3.32	3.55	3.68	3.55	4.14	4.36	3.36	3.68	3.05	3.77	4.23	3.82	4	3.68	3.59	3.64	4.14	3.5	3.82	3.73	3.82	3.91	
Shared Admin	4.6	4.8	4.8	4.4	3.8	4.2	4.4	4.6	4	4.6	4.4	4.8	2.2	2.4	4	1.4	3.8	3.8	4.2	3.4	3.8	1.8	1.8	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.4	4.2	4.4	4.6	4	3.8	4.4	4.2	4	3.8	4	4.2	4.2	4	4.4	4.4	4.6	4.2	4.6	4.6	4.2	4	3.8	4	4.2	4.4	4.6	4.4	3.6	4	4.4	
SME/TT	3.78	4.09	3.04	3.17	3.52	4.52	4.43	3.91	3.04	2.61	2.91	3.48	2.78	3.35	3.43	2.17	3.43	3.78	3.39	3.17	3.61	2.74	2.3	3.65	3.78	3.83	3.65	3.13	3.43	4	3.52	3.26	3.87</																											

Appendix C

Consolidated and Aggregated Interview Results.

	Affected my leadership	Affected my language	Observed language change in peers	Observed language change in leaders (if a manager) or managers (if a leader)	Observed leadership change in peers	Observed leadership change in leaders (if a manager) or managers (if a leader)	Knew it from before	Themes emerging	Relationship to Researcher
L1	No – it validated it.	Yes – absolutely, more conscious of what I say.	Yes, common language	No	Some yes but mostly no.	No		One of the most significant things we've done, takes time – the rocket – smoke and fire and it still sits there, then – it took too long 6 – 8 months, senior leadership buy in is vital.	Close colleague, respectful, friendly, trusting. Big fan of the program. Same age.
L2	Yes, purposeful listening, slowing down to understand	Yes a little bit maybe. I try to make the message stick.	Not sure		Generally yes but it is not consistent, some really investing and others are stuck.			Internal communications challenges, making time to “be there” for people, its just talk right now, need to get to action, deeds not words – 3 times, real disconnect what we are doing and what we think we are doing, know do gap, we know communications is an issue but we haven't do anything about it, it won't stick until we operationalise it.	Collegial, respectful, friendly, trusting. Fan of the program. Same age.
L3	Yes, it left an imprint and I probably have changed my behaviours	Absolutely, a lot, thinking about what others need.	Yes, especially when working through tough issues.		Yes, more trust and a common sense of purpose shown.			It's not just about walking the walk, it's how we as leaders act, what shadow we cast. I may be one of the people who has a stop gap between knowing it and living it. Out of our comfort zone – 3 times. It was about going from good to better, not throwing away what we had, building on it.	Occasionally distant, highest rank interviewed, respectful, occasionally suspicious about my motives. Big fan of the program. Same age.
L4	Yes, I think I have to say yes to that.	Yes also in that, small elements, using different words.			Well I know changes have happened. Senior leaders are working a bit differently now.	Small elements but not substantial change.	Nothing in the journey I hadn't heard before		Trusted, respectful, supportive.. Big fan of the program. Older.
L5	I think I'm now better in adapting to my counterparts.	Yes, I create more open space for discussion and openness.	Yes generally we have much more of a very personal interaction, so there is, I experience there is much more room for not only exchanging the current activities, but exchanging thoughts, way ahead, discussing pro and cons	Yes overall my impression is that there was a need for this kind of improvement because this is a style people feel more comfortable with in the language we started to use. There is more communications going on now.	There are several differences which are really obvious. More awareness if people are under pressure and stress.	Yes I think so. I hear stories of more feedback and better communications. People understand “what makes them tick”.	It reminds me again of crucial leadership styles, it is common practice in my Nation.	Well in my younger days you were educated that there is something which makes up a perfect leader. Its best practice, part of officers training and education since the beginning. Be clear to everybody what your intent is, do into action so that you have got permanent feedback how your message is received, I know precisely what we are involved in but it's also very good to listen to what is the specific part an individual is dealing with.	Direct line manager. Trusting, respectful, and highly supportive. Fan of the program. Same age
L6	I try to do things a little bit differently.	Yes somewhat, German language is very very straight, easy to offend in a multinational environment.	No I don't think so	It's difficult to tell.	No, on my level absolutely ok between leaders.	I cannot answer for the time being		Platoon, Battalion, Regimental leadership – 7 times. Certain structures of behaviour are fixed, I do not pretend to change my behaviour. I expect the commander to give orders, the Chief of Staff to organise. No difference in a transformational HQ to an operational one. What I am sometimes missing is that an order is an order and that we are really used to follow or to give orders and that a timeline is a timeline and not a basis for a new discussion.	Remote and suspicious about the program. Likened to a religious cult. Tolerant but sceptical towards me. Not especially supportive unless being watched by higher. Older.
L7	Yes.		Yes, at least we are talking more, definitely in our leadership group. More flexibility to express opinions and suggestions for somebody else's responsibility.	Yes in our planning meetings. I see at least examples of people checking up with colleagues. There is definitely more “we” than “I” now.					Cool relationship but respectful of the aims. Occasionally cynical over my involvement. Older.
L8	Yes, I try and use all the tools, methods, good practice we have learned.	I say “OK, be rational first” I mean don't put too much emotion in if it doesn't make sense.	Not really and this is an issue because I was expecting more, yeah., I was expecting more coordination, more working collaboration.		I think that there is probably less tension when we meet.	It does change a lot, the relationship, the way that we are talking to each other and the way we are interacting of course, some of them especially.		We are all coming from different cultures, I knew that but didn't consider that it would be so challenging. I'm not afraid to be quite straight I think it is my own responsibility to be straight. I put in my signature block “say what you do and do what you say! So everybody can see that and I try to stick to that.	Collegial, respectful, friendly, trusting. Fan of the program. Younger.
L9	I hope it affected me. Personally it has made me who I am here, walking the corridors. Getting around and talking to people.	I try not to interrupt, I try to hear everyone's point of view.	So for me I have seen a change in language without any shadow of a doubt and then the doing it.	People are not just using the language, people are doing it.	What I have seen is a real effort to embrace all of our individuals and bring them along.	I've seen change even in the most cynical people. There is openness to the concepts that I definitely see across the team.	It was a healthy reminder	Fictions (- 7 times) lay at the leadership level. We are mostly over 50 and a cynical (-7 times) bunch. All nationalities look at leadership in a slightly different way. We need to do more as leadership, they is no consistent work ethic.	Collegial, respectful, friendly, trusting. Fan of the program. Older.

	Affected my leadership	Affected my language	Observed language change in peers	Observed language change in leaders (if a manager) or managers (if a leader)	Observed leadership change in peers	Observed leadership change in leaders (if a manager) or managers (if a leader)	Knew it from before	Themes emerging	Relationship to Researcher
M1	Yes - allowing non-native speakers to lead	Yes – musk ox metaphor.	Got better, much more open, frank and volunteering	Got worse, saying but not doing.	Yes – OPRs lead in spite of CG. They trust.	None to worse, disconnected and watching from “Ivory tower”.		Wanted more D&G - mentioned 13 times, more trust – 34 times, walk the talk - misses the “old days”, platoon, company, battalion leadership “yes...my Battalion was 700”, wants leadership to “walk around” – 10 times, to lead the “musk ox ring”, say do gap - , wants to be consulted	Mutually respectful, friendly, trusting.
M2	No not very much. I was already doing it.	I don't think it changed very much.	Not really – seniors are all doing well, they are credible and good at what they do.	Possibly but it's hard to tell.	No changes our current leadership is good at letting people know they are appreciated.	Not that I have noticed		It's just how it is, Nations send who they want, we already have a NATO code of conduct, I'm sceptical, it's all too hard, and unnecessary. Across the board we don't see enough of the leaders wandering the corridors. The way that superiors behave has a massive influence on the organisation as a whole.	Fairly ambivalent, respects what I was trying to do. Friendly, passive. Older.
M3	No, I am not changing my styles or changing myself	No. my language changed over 7 years not the last 1.	They are changing but not because of the culture process	I couldn't see or observe direct impact that I can correlate this.	Old mature managers on their last military job, not a group that is easy to change	Not with this group, they are already there.	Knew this from before, no new concepts	Diversity is strength, saw culture shaping as a threat to this. Requirement to trust more. Sceptical – 7 times. Cultural shaping sometimes is not a good thing. What is the problem we are trying to fix? Come on – do we really have time for this?	Mutual mistrust, frustration as he's had some initiatives quashed, Non- collegial relation developed over many years. Same age.
M4	No, it developed anyway but no link to the culture shaping process.	No	I haven't seen any evidence of this	Leaders have not changed the way they lead. We don't change the style when we go from National to NATO leadership settings.	Provided a useful benchmark but also a weapon – people held up for not applying the concepts.	Not really.	Yes. A lot of reminders but nothing new.	Any changes that were seen faded rapidly. Delegation is a real challenge. Recognised but helpless to do anything about it. Need to have much more 1-1's from leadership – 3 times. That's just the way it is.	Distant but mutually respectful.
M5	No my personal leadership has not changed.	No I don't think the way I communicate has changed, I listen more perhaps. Use less UK metaphors that others don't understand.	No, I would say that relationships with peers are less harmonious and the language more polarised.	No they are disconnected, they should be delegating and empowering.	No, I think at the working level people just get on and do what they have to do. Some have been COS's, DCOMs etc.	They tried to adjust, they just aren't gelling, I don't know if it is National issues.		One can't be quite as direct in dealing in the multinational environment as we can be in the national environment. Leaders are educated in different ways depending upon their Nationality. Need more delegation – 5 times. Good communications isn't an event – its day to day, walking around – 9 times. There is a need for leaders to take a breath, to reflect – 11 times.	Collegial, trusting, respectful, friendly. OK with the program. Younger.
M6	Yes on a personal front.		No, I don't think so.	No, do they know what needs to be communicated? Leaders need to concentrate externally and let the worker bees do what they need to do.	I am not sure I've seen improvement in peers, I think it is the opposite.	Got much worse, there is a lack of mutual understanding at the leaders group.		Not empowered enough, massive reduction in ability to influence leaders. Being aware is not the same as acting on it. Leaders find it difficult to delegate - 3. There are cultural tensions between the Nations. I want to be inspired, encouraged, I know what managing a resource is. They is definitely a piece missing about leading by example. If you want certain behaviours you have to live by it. Do as I do and do as I say. You must live by what you say, because if you don't it's a credibility issue again.	Shared similar history, very collegial, connected, respectful, friendly, trusting. Fan of the program. Younger.
M7	Not a lot, not an awful lot in this case.	No I can't say that it has	Yeah I think a very slight change, slight change, I wouldn't say cataclysmic, some people more open and allowing input from a broader base.	There might have been an initial shift but it never stayed.	A couple of isolated examples. My respect for my peer group and superiors is greatly influenced by the way they work.	I didn't notice any change induced by the culture shaping in terms of the senior leaders, no.	It was a good reminder as far as I was concerned.	We should all know and do this anyway. I have worked in NATO before and you know frankly, I am one of these guys, I don't need direction, in fact I don't like direction, I like the broader, go figure out what you need, just give me the boundaries. I think we need a little more clarity about our main efforts, agreement over our priorities. We have too many tribes here, divisional tribes, national tribes and no clear shared awareness. That has to start at the top.	Collegial, infrequent contact, respectful, friendly. OK with the program. Same age. .
M8	Personally little effect I would say.	I would say nothing of any substance.	I have no evidence of it, I haven't really seen it.	No, I don't see much accountability in the leaders.	There is not enough peer to peer co-ordination going on.	You've been here long enough to know that there's leaders themselves who might not have taken on the accountability measures I'm talking about but I think that's one trend you can see throughout the building.		No clarity about the outcome of the program. “What is the problem we were trying to address?” People hang out in National bunches not functional bunches. The program was a commercially biased one and we are not the same, we are military. It's not relevant for us. I am sceptical about the survey and cynical about the results. Many people here are at the end of their careers with too much deference to National lines rather than military chains of command. There needs to be a “JWC hat”, not a JED hat, not a JCID hat etc. We should put our organisation first.	Tolerated given my lack of a uniform, suspicious, fairly dismissive about the program. Younger.
M9	No. I already have my Marine Corp ethos. We try to hold ourselves to a different leadership standard than any other service.	None of it was earth shattering to me as a new concept or approach. No, no, no.	No I can't say that I have, with the exception of a couple of common phrases maybe.	No nothing tangible	None – same ones lead, same ones hide, and nothing is done about it. I saw leaders nod agreement that there was an understanding that action would take place, so there was hope for me that something tangible, not just words, I want actions, and a lot of times that has never followed.	I've been saying for years that there has been a lack of command guidance, intent, direction, it's lacking. I don't know first-hand but it seems broken to me.	Yes, there was nothing that was new to me.	As a marine I might say “I need YOU to do this, can you do it?” or I might not ask that, just say “Get it done!” The ability for somebody to say “no I don't want to do something for personal reasons” and there's no repercussions to it amazes me. We are all military and there should be some kind of baseline we are all operation off. I would always say that I have always pointed to the top, because they set the standard. Direction and guidance is missing – 9 times. It starts at the top, clear, concise guidance, reshape the culture to function like a military one. The boss says “we need to fix this” and then nothing happens, so what does his word mean?	Distant but also collegial, respectful, friendly. Tolerant if dismissive about the program. Younger.





# Professional **VALUES**

**I AM A NATO PROFESSIONAL.** I represent an Alliance dedicated to safeguarding the freedom and security of its Members. As such, I will maintain a strong sense of pride, duty and service. I will work hard to ensure that the job is done right and I will remain loyal to my colleagues, to the Joint Warfare Centre and to NATO. I will show up to work every day, ready to bring my best game to the table and embrace the following professional values that guide my daily interactions.

**Innovative.** As a NATO professional I will adopt an innovative and collaborative spirit that values the contributions of every single person. I will invite new ideas and listen from a position of curiosity and appreciation in order to truly understand. I will strive to learn from experience whilst at the same time being aware of my filters and blind spots. I will engage as a “Participant-Supporter-Coach” so that we can grow as individuals and as an organization.

**Supportive.** As a NATO professional I will support my fellow colleagues whenever and wherever I can. I will assume positive intention in others while actively supporting and developing others. I will “be here now” for others as a default setting and I will ask for and offer appreciative and constructive



## JOINT WARFARE CENTRE

feedback and coaching. I will be honest and respectful with my assessments, curious about my own development and use these moments to better our team and myself.

**Inclusive.** As a NATO professional I will respect and embrace our differences. I will listen for understanding and ensure that we value the contributions of everyone. I will actively seek out and share information and best practices. There are no “back benchers” in JWC — our team is a dazzling, dynamic blend of Nations, regional cultures, civilian and military service perspectives. Therefore, I will take the time to include and appreciate the work done in areas other than my own.

**Accountable.** As a NATO professional I will hold myself accountable and I will serve unselfishly in peace so that others may succeed in war. I will take time to create a shared meaning and will ask, “what else can I do...” to support the effort. I will ensure that I know what our priorities are and help to focus on our “blue chips” and to the critical paths that are under our control and influence. I will be mindful of my own moods, manage my own energy levels and be mindful of the shadow I cast, and I will create opportunities for those I work with to be equally accountable for our shared co-created success.

Together, as NATO professionals of the Joint Warfare Centre, we are:  
*“ONE TEAM. TRAINING NATO. TRANSFORMING WARFARE. SECURING THE ALLIANCE.”*



Committee on Research Ethics

## PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

### TITLE OF STUDY

***(The language of leadership through an organisational culture shaping journey.)  
An analysis on the impact on the interactions of senior leaders within a military HQ  
as they/we progress through a major organisational culture alignment process.***

### Version Number and Date

V.0.1 - 26<sup>th</sup> July 2013

### INVITATION

*I would like to invite you to consider participating in a research study. Before you decide whether to participate, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and feel free to ask me if you would like more information or if there is anything that you do not understand. Please also feel free to discuss this with your colleagues, managers and relatives if you wish. I would like to stress that you do not have to accept this invitation and should only agree to take part if you want to.*

***Thank you for reading this.***

### PARTICIPANTS FAQs

#### 1. What is the purpose of the study?

I want to analyse the response of my organisation to an organisational culture shaping initiative that will take place within our highly structured and formalised organisation. The culture shaping initiative is designed to increase the effectiveness of the JWC (Joint Warfare Centre) across a number of areas of concern following a JWC wide organisational behaviours survey. Some of the areas of concern include lack of communications, stove piping, lack of coaching, insufficient value expressed to individuals and lack of an organisational awareness of what the JWC mission and visions are. Since so many of these appear to be connected to internal communications I intend, at this point, to concentrate on researching a comparison with the language that is used by leaders pre/post the culture shaping journey.

I am curious to know if the rhetoric and discourse changes as a result of the intervention and if the participants believe that the language used is a critical factor in the organisational culture shaping activity.

#### 2. Why have I been chosen to be invited to take part?

You are in a position of senior leadership and you may also have influential leaders above you. You have at least one year remaining at the JWC so that we can explore any changes over a reasonable period of time. You are part of up to 20 staff who may be able to help shed light on the importance of the language of the leaders in the JWC's desire to become even more effective than we are today.

#### 3. Do I have to take part?

Absolutely not. Although the COM and COS have agreed that I should be allowed access to all staff and have approved the theme of the research they, and I, are clear that the participation is voluntary and that you are free to withdraw at anytime without explanation and without incurring a disadvantage. Results up to the period of withdrawal may be used, if you are happy for this to be done. Otherwise you may request that they are destroyed and no further use will be made of them.

#### **4. What will happen if I take part?**

I will be observing our organisational culture attributes as the change journey evolves to try and make sense of any linguistic relevancies. Through informal semi structured interviews I will ask your insights and experiences regarding the journey in respect to changes in the stories, the metaphors, the language used and the way that language is delivered. Specifically:

- I will be the only researcher and the primary aim will be to learn more about our organisation through observations and interviews.
- The interviews may take place up to 4 times over the next 12 months and will take no more than an hour.
- I ask only that you are honest during our discussions and that we both keep the details of the discussions private so that we do not accidentally lead others to conclusions that are not their own.

I will ask your permission to record the discussion for the only reason that I will be able to fully be present during our discussions and then be able to transcribe actual conversations accurately afterwards. The transcribed text will be offered to you before I use any of the descriptions for anything else. They will be stored on my work laptop which is password and identity protected and you will be identified by a random number so that only I will be able to identify who said what.

#### **5. Are there any risks in taking part?**

No. I will ensure your anonymity and confidentiality at all times. I will follow the University guidelines and our conversations and any observations will remain non attributable.

#### **6. Are there any benefits in taking part?**

There may be some limited side benefits. It may provide you with a useful period to reflect on language and culture in a multinational command and control environment. It may as a side effect improve your own language awareness and communications skills.

#### **7. What if I am unhappy or if there is a problem?**

I will be available to you to discuss any concerns you have at any time during the research period and if I am not able to ease your concerns then you are free to contact the research project Principal Investigator Dr Lisa Anderson ([l.anderson@liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:l.anderson@liverpool.ac.uk)) and she will try to help. If you remain unhappy or have a complaint which you feel you cannot come to the Research Governance Officer on 0151 794 8290 ([ethics@liv.ac.uk](mailto:ethics@liv.ac.uk)). When contacting the Research Governance Officer, please provide details of the name or description of the study (so that it can be identified), the researcher(s) involved, and the details of the complaint you wish to make.

#### **8. Will my participation be kept confidential?**

The record of my observations and the transcribed texts will be stored on my work laptop which is password and identity protected and you will be identified by a random number so that only I will be able to identify who said what and once a number of people have been allocated numbers I will also not be able to track who said what. I will retain a backup copy on a USB drive that is also password protected and wipes after 3 attempts to

access the drive without the correct password. I will ensure your anonymity and confidentiality at all times. I will retain the data for up to three years as a basis for my own personal reflection after the thesis is written. After that time the laptop will be wiped, reformatted and prepared for destruction IAW NATO procedures. The USB drive will be stripped of all recordings and transcriptions although I will retain the thesis intact.

### **9. What will happen to the results of the study?**

The results are primarily related to my thesis work. Depending on what is found there may be value in sharing the results with other NATO commands and other military command and control entities. There will be no way to identify the participants in the research paper. Data will be kept no longer than five years after the study.

### **10. What will happen if I want to stop taking part?**

You are free to withdraw at any time, without explanation. Results up to the period of withdrawal may be used, if you are happy for this to be done. Otherwise you may request that they are destroyed and no further use is made of them.

### **11. Who can I contact if I have further questions?**

You can make contact with the **Principal Investigator (Dr Lisa Anderson – [l.anderson@liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:l.anderson@liverpool.ac.uk))** who will be happy to try and answer any other questions you may have.

## Appendix F – Thematic Grid

Themes as Predicted from the Research and Revealed during the Interviews			
Theme	Example	Interview	Literature
Teamwork	<p>“In the United States Army, there are two types of leaders, those that get to the top over the broken bodies of the people they have crushed on the way up and then there’s the ones that have built teams and co-opted and they are lifted up by their supportiveness”</p> <p>“The only team he felt comfortable with was his immediate Musk Ox team down there and he performed, we just had the exercise, he performed above and beyond expectation and it was such a joy for me to sit in the back and just watch this and just see all the others, <i>‘hot damn, he’s good’ ‘yes he is good’</i> because he was allowed to be good.”</p> <p>“I observe it, in every member of my team, a steep curve, not learning but they are getting more and more made sure they already were made sure but they are getting more and more made sure, I can see that now for, I am sure this thing affected our, provided them with some positive, knowhow as well, which completed their picture but I couldn’t see or observe direct impact that I can correlate this.”</p>	Managers	Brief et al., 1996
	<p>“Communication and teamwork is all about in the Joint Warfare Centre.”</p> <p>“You know unless somebody is shooting at you and nobody is shooting at us so we don’t have to be barking and directive it’s more participative and team building environment I think.”</p> <p>“I am trying to get a personal development plan going for everybody in the organisation and I have a team who are producing that for me.”</p> <p>“It was a culmination of things so for me it was a teambuilding event I mean there is no question about that and it broke barriers.”</p>	Leaders	
Relationships	<p>“It's about using influence to guide people about where those governance problems lie and often they are not automatic about internal JWC management it's about where we sit in our support network as it were, our relationship with MOD Norway, our relationship with NCIA, our relationship with ACT and others.”</p>	Leader	Chan, 2002

## Appendix F – Thematic Grid

	<p>“I talking about my relationship with Colonel Bishop, my relationship with General Bergea at the time, my relationship with Victor Savannas, Michael Johansson, ACT, SHAPE, JFTC Brunssum, Naples.”</p> <p>“I think it has also to do with comradeship because formerly we are equal for example if you are a branch head amongst others you are, you could have a good relationship or you can be a rival if you feel to be in a rivalry but it has to be in a level of comradeship not as a boss.”</p> <p>“I would actually go as far as saying the relationship with the other Branch Heads has become more polarised over the year rather than more harmonious and so much of this is personality driven, clearly my personality fits into that equation as well.”</p>	Managers	
Communication	<p>“Communication is not only the language, communication is the cultures.”</p> <p>“The communication in all direction, lateral as well as up and down changed over time, so but it was not because of cultural shaping it was of getting familiar with the personalities, learning more about my people.”</p> <p>“It’s been really exciting to see a common language across the Joint Warfare Centre.”</p>	Managers	Andriopoulos et al., 2008
	<p>“They learned about leadership and a little bit more about the communications, those things like ‘<i>ok people have different perspective</i>’, they see their front lead, they know it now, they didn’t, or they haven’t so that is good”.</p>	Leader	



## Appendix F – Thematic Grid

Trust	<p>“It’s all about trusting people, loyalty, not looking at the outer paraphernalia but actually, and then take a risk, because I have also had the opposite. I completely missed it, I trusted somebody and that went completely wrong, so yeah you win some you lose some, but applying the very personal touch.”</p> <p>“I have had five international deployments, Balkans, Afghanistan, Iraq and stuff like that but when I came back from my second tour it suddenly became very clear to me that it’s not a joke when you say that you need to trust the man next to you in the fox hole, and you cannot let the man next to you in the fox hole down, and it’s just so ingrained in me that when I do stuff, and I recognise I’m sometimes a little bit over the top and I see that, but it’s all about, if I don’t do my job the next guy can’t do his job therefore we will fall apart and that cannot happen.”</p> <p>“It not only helped us in the way that we work together because of the behaviour because of a belief that there was a more effective means but it allowed us to build trust and build that common sense of purpose so it wasn't just about the concepts it was also about building the trust the organisation needed that would sustain the belief that we were all in this together now.”</p>	Managers	Bijlsma-Frankema, 2001
	<p>“I have fully trust in them and my feeling was they trusted me and that’s the base I can’t imagine to be better.”</p>	Leader	
Commitment	<p>“I think the point we made earlier and made often that we collectively that this is only going to work if the leadership is actively involved and sincerely committed and sincerely believes. Because if we are just paying lip service to it then, people are not stupid, no one in this organisation got here by being fool.”</p> <p>“The Chief and General Buller have committed their time, spoken openly and cast a definitive shadow there is now question in my mind they are committed to the well-being and health of this organisation.”</p>	Manager	Blanchard, 2010
	<p>“I think first it's more commitment from the upper end because you need someone that doesn't fear to not to take responsibility that's not the point but that doesn't fear to fight.”</p> <p>“For me personally it's about seeing myself and I think that, you know most leaders develop an operating style and they have to believe in themselves and kind of commit to their operating style to make it work.”</p>	Leaders	

## Appendix F – Thematic Grid

	<p>“I don't know because it's not, we need to set aside some time to remind ourselves recommit ourselves and that's on a pretty regular basis and without making it doctrinaire you know somehow we've just got to say ‘remember these are the things that make us better’</p> <p>“The fact that this is even alive and kicking still is really a testament to leadership a testament to the commitment and a testament to the validity of the concept,”</p> <p>“It is just the fact that the key leaders were in a room together was it the fact that they were committing to something collectively was it the coffee breaks where they was there something else in there that is a byproduct of this journey that was impactful that we could.”</p>		
Recognition	Not really brought up		Senn and Hart, 2006
Support	<p>“There’s the ones that have built teams and co-opted and they are lifted up by their supportiveness and it’s a relatively good thing to be promoted to Colonel in the United States Army and I think I’ve been one of the guys that’s built teams and helped me this is not the eagle belongs to all the people that I have ever worked with.”</p>	Manager	Hu and Hang, 2007
	<p>“I mean they were all ready, intelligent, articulated, motivated young leaders and it’s hard to improve on something like that, I have seen it in other branches where people are more openly supportive of, in regards proactive information sharing.”</p> <p>“Now hear the individual commenting upon that I would even like to support you a bit more in the COS Huddle discussions.”</p> <p>“My observation is that it shouldn't be a surprise but from time to time it is a surprise that people have almost similar experiences what is helping them, what is supportive and what is not, but the way we shared and created more open discussion and openness amongst each other made it much easier.”</p>	Leaders	
Credibility	<p>“Certainly for two and a half years I’ve been here, where the floor plates are very aware that the relationships between the OF5’s aren’t always productive and that’s because they are not having those, you know those professional behaviours that you expect, you must live by what you say because if you don’t it’s a credibility issue again.”</p> <p>“I think the senior leadership is doing well, and telling people that they are doing a good job, in a credible way.”</p>	Leaders	Senn and Hart, 2006

## Appendix F – Thematic Grid

	<p>“No on the contrary, nothing has changed which is even worse because they say that they will change but they are not changing.”</p> <p>“I have a section that’s going out to these organisations, you need some military because there is a bit of credibility, some Head Quarters prefer it, but what you need is somebody who knows what it is.”</p>	Managers	
Accountability	<p>“A lot of the decision making processes that were taken nobody has got any accountability for it, so you know, ..... - gone. Where is the accountability for that decision and now we know there is an issue a bit later on, so again that it where I would deal with transparency.”</p> <p>“The fact that each of our Divisions tends to be more focused to some outward body rather than inward focus. What I think could be done to improve the functioning of the staff has to do more with the accountability function is probably the most important, I don’t see much of that.”</p> <p>“The DOM should be enforcing that but a tasker tracker is a symptom I think of a general lack of accountability throughout the building.”</p>	Managers	Heskett, 2011
	<p>“I think the Nations that have OF5’s here will generally have higher expectations from their Military Staff than will the Nations that don’t have a OF5’s here. That is not a rule at all, you’ve been here long enough to know that there’s OF5’s themselves who might not have taken on the accountability measures I’m talking about but I think that’s one trend you can see throughout the building.”</p> <p>“It’s the how we hold each other accountable how we support each other how we prioritise you know all of those kinds of things start to eat at the cultural progress that good intentions create.”</p>	Leaders	
Respect	<p>“The way that Superiors behave has a massive influence on the organisation as a whole, and on a personal level I try to live up to certain standards, I’m sure I don’t always achieve that, and I think that my respect for my peer group and superiors is greatly influenced by the way they work.”</p> <p>“I think it’s more along the lines of personal style and recognising that the personal style of respecting everybody as a contributor”</p> <p>“It doesn’t mean you can’t get angry with them or demand proper performance but you really have to be respectful of them as individuals and their individual talents.”</p>	Managers	Kline, 1999
		Managers	

## Appendix F – Thematic Grid

	<p>“I think a renewed respect for the work that people do and everybody is part of the process. A renewed respect for attitude, for organisational atmosphere.”</p> <p>“I think I was intuitively respectful of people and their filters and their points of view.”</p> <p>“When I was a former commander in other positions as I was mentoring subordinate commanders I would tell them when you talk on the phone people listen not to your words but the way you talk on the phone if you are respectful on the phone they will learn to respectful if you are disrespectful and scream and yell they will learn to be disrespectful scream and yell.”</p> <p>“I think I've I try to be respectful especially not because we are all senior Officers but mainly we are all senior Officers I mean different age different experience and I am not considering that I am better than I mean one of my Norwegian colleagues or my English colleagues or my US colleagues we have all different experiences I think it helped me to take some to be a little bit.”</p>	Leaders	
Flexibility	“They really want the organisation to be strong, healthy and positive for the future because the events of the last six weeks have clearly demonstrated, functionally demonstrated that we have to be a flexible organisation.”	Manager	Hallinger, 2010
	<p>“I have seen organisations where they were not so flexible and not so collaborative.”</p> <p>“I think also there has been some, let say, more flexibility at least in the leadership that I belong to.”</p>	Leaders	
Learning	“If you were in the team now, you would see that, we are talking about this exercise, that exercise, how can we solve an issue that, it was like several years ago it was like you know talking about this and that, you know it was, it was not like positive but you know, complaining about this and that and that, nowadays everyone is talking about ‘how can we improve this? How can we improve this?’	Manager	Harris and Ogbonna, 2011
Listening	<p>“If you really want people to care you need to talk to people directly not send an email, not make a phone call, and you need to seriously listen to what people have to say, not just to pay lip service.”</p> <p>“That is in principle of course a good thing because clearly people have been doing this, they have been listening and they want to chance, but the thing is if you don’t combine that with the right acts it becomes even more hollow and from my prospective.”</p>	Manager	Not initially predicted through the literature but emphasized by the interviewees.

## Appendix F – Thematic Grid

	<p>“That had a huge impact on my because I’m quite a forceful person and I didn’t tend to listen to other people, I tend to speak and I didn’t tend to listen and for me it was a big eye opener and you know it just reinforces what you get told at home <i>‘just shut up, we’re talking, just listen to us for five minutes’</i> so it did make me stop and just say <i>‘look you know other people have got an opinion, you know given them the time to express that opinion’</i>, and sometimes it’s good just to listen.”</p> <p>“The value of taking the time and really giving them the opportunity to make their case and so it’s patient listening and what I’ve benefited from that is that there are some brilliant ideas out there that just need a little bit of coaxing.”</p> <p>“So part of that is that be in the moment when you’re have a one on one conversation but the other part is the listening effectively and asking those key questions to further develop the idea so that’s probably the thing that sticks out to me as the most beneficial piece that I’ve learnt.”</p>	Leaders	
Empowered	<p>“We do stuff that in other places that is much higher grade’, so why are we are we seeing so much that’s wrong and in other areas if we just look at look at it slightly differently it’s great that we have that level of empowerment, it’s great that we’ve got so much freedom to maneuver, I mean for me personally I would hate being told ‘here’s your directional guidance, don’t move out of it.’</p> <p>“You can do that but then that goes back to my original analogy of leadership you can do that over broken bodies or you can make life long partners and really I see organisations that are empowering that empower their employers where you see initiative and innovation and great ideas.”</p>	Managers	Not initially predicted through the literature but emphasized by the interviewees.
	<p>“I think that you know a couple of things that I think about in culture - culture changing and leadership is how do you empower people to lead in an organisation that is a hierarchical structure organisation and because the real challenge we have is we are all comfortable with the hierarchy.”</p> <p>“I just think that’s probably just an interesting one to kind of think through given a military structure how do you tell everybody you know other than your personal conduct and perceptions how do you empower them to lead to a collective uplifting of culture?”</p>	Leaders	
Appreciated	<p>“I think it is the core thing there is that the individual feels appreciated, has the motivation, is happy about his whole situation both professional and private.”</p> <p>“Our current Senior Leadership is good at letting people know that what they’re doing is appreciated”</p>	Leaders	Not initially predicted through the literature but emphasized

## Appendix F – Thematic Grid

	“So it has made me aware it’s made me think about that more I think more appreciative of everybody’s talents.”		by the interviewees.
Energized	<p>“It's important to keep certain levels of energy in work time.”</p> <p>“We have to give people some permission and guidance on how to expend their energy and we haven't really done that yet.”</p> <p>“I think so particularly given the pressure that everybody's under and right here right now there are more personality, challenges, that are going on out here because everybody wants the last bit of energy that this guy has and we are all (laugh) I think we're better positioned to respond to that now than we were six months ago.”</p>	Leaders	Not initially predicted through the literature but emphasized by the interviewees.
Coached	“If you want to improve the reputation of JWC you must let people grow professionally, that includes a degree of mentoring, coaching, training, as well as letting them demonstrate what they are good at.”	Manager	Not initially predicted through the literature but emphasized by the interviewees.
Innovative	“There’s lots of ‘ <i>we have always done it that way</i> ’ mentality, and again for me that just suffocates innovation, I’m not saying that OF5’s have to be the sole drivers of all the good ideas.”	Leaders	Not initially predicted through the literature but emphasized by the interviewees.
	<p>“Promote good ideas, don’t quash them because we haven’t got the staffing resources because that’s actually quite a poor excuse, it’s just stymied innovation and people’s appetite to take stuff on, you when you start pushing, loyal people to the point they don’t care then what have you lost, well you’ve probably lost a lot but you don’t know what you’ve lost because you never explored it.”</p> <p>“OK it’s good to be innovative if you work in the support branch, new ways of combining transportation and providing less work synergy , all that, being innovative in terms of exercise delivery on you know very stringent processes.”</p>	Manager	

## Acronyms & Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Content
ACO	Allied Commander Operations
ACT	Allied Commander Transformation
AMN	Afghanistan Mission Network
C <sup>2</sup>	Command and Control
CFI	Connected Forces Initiative
COS	Chief of Staff
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HQ	Headquarter
HRD	Human Resources Development
ISAF	International Stabilisation Forces Afghanistan
JALLC	Joint Analysis and Lessons Learned
JFC	Joint Force Command
JFTC	Joint Force Training Centre
JWC	Joint Warfare Centre
MOD	Ministry of Defence
NAC	North Atlantic Council
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NEDP	NATO Executive Development Program
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NNEC	NATO Network Enabled Capability
NRF	NATO Response Forces
OF(#)	Officer (grade)
OPR	Officer of Primary Responsibility
RTO	Research and Technical Organisation
SAGE	Strategic Annual Guidance for Exercises
SC	Strategic Commands
SHAPE	Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe
SME	Subject Matter Expert
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
UN	United Nations
VJTF	Very Rapid Joint Task Force